

Hyperight Nordic *100* in Data Analytics & AI



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The order of the list is solely based on alphabetical order, and it doesn’t indicate any ranking.

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Welcome to Hyperight Nordic 100 in Data, Analytics and AI list 2021.

An independent list fully curated by our Editorial team designed to recognize and celebrate the work and the efforts of exceptional individuals in our network who are driving the Data and AI innovation forward, selflessly sharing their knowledge with others, and inspiring young generations and other practitioners to follow the same path.

For the past 6 years we have been serving the Nordic Data, Analytics and AI community by creating knowledge-sharing and benchmarking platforms for junior and senior practitioners in the area. Along the way, we got lucky enough to meet some amazing innovators, doers, pioneers, and evangelists who really stood out with their radical ideas, impact, and energy. Individuals that always burn to make a change, always hungry to learn and share, that are loud enough to influence a movement, and that are paving the highway for the ones that will follow.

Today, with this list we want to pay tribute to some of them, to their work and their footprint on the improvement of data management and advanced analytics maturity in the Nordics. The list consists of speakers, experts, influencers, and practitioners. As the list is short and not all in our 25 000 Data community network can be added to it at once, we want you to be an integral part of the selection process. That way we can all decide who is going to be in the list each year. You can read more about our selection process in the document below. For those of you who did not make the list this year, we look forward to having you in the years to come.

With that said, I encourage you to read forward. The document is more than just a list.

Goran Cvetanovski
Founder | Hyperight

The List!



An independent list fully curated by the Hyperight Editorial Team

The list features Data, Advanced Analytics & AI practitioners or individuals strongly dedicated to supporting the data community and accelerating the Data and AI innovation capabilities in the Nordic region. They can be Data and AI practitioners working in midsize companies or enterprises, academics, individuals promoting ideas or actions to increase the maturity in the area, experts in vendor organisations or agencies, governmental initiative representatives, spokesmen, or simply innovators developing new ways of working, new products or services.

The Hyperight Nordic 100 In Data, Analytics and AI 2021 is divided into 9 categories depending on the area that practitioners are working in or supporting: **Data Management, Business Analytics and BI, Data Science, Machine Learning, AI, Data Engineering, Applied Analytics, Innovation and finally Ethics, Diversity and Regulation.**

How is the list Curated

Although curated by the Hyperight editorial team (**Editor's Choice**), part of the list is open to nominations by the Nordic data community (**Community Choice**). As a matter of fact, every practitioner working with Data, Analytics and AI in the Nordics can apply to be listed or nominate someone else.

When curating the list we take into account three main criterias:

- 1 Leadership and Innovation** - Individuals who have shown leadership and innovation skills within their or many other organisations, demonstrating and advocating the importance and value of Data, Advanced Analytics and AI.
- 2 Influence and Engagement** - Engagement with the broader Data, Analytics and AI industry is important. This can include being a member of an industry council, speaking at industry conferences or taking part in meet-ups, creating knowledge-sharing and collaboration activities, having published research or showcasing thought leadership through different channels.
- 3 Delegate Feedback** - In some small cases we have selected Nordic speakers whose presentations have been received with great enthusiasm by the delegates attending Hyperight events.



Community Choice nominated individuals are subject to selection by the Hyperight editors based on the above criteria.

Nomination entries are free of charge and confidential. You can apply or nominate a colleague at www.hyperight.com/nordic100.

Individuals listed in the Hyperight Nordic 100, will have the possibility to be included in the voting list for the Hyperight 2021 Awards and win a reward in one of the 9 categories by Hyperight and its partners revealed at the 6th edition of the Data Innovation Summit scheduled for 13th to 15th of October 2021.

The voting is done publicly by the Nordic Data Community through our hyperight.com webpage.





Important timelines

- 16th April** - The list is published and made public
- 1st September** - Announcement of the final list of the Hyperight Nordic 100 and start of the voting process
- 7th October** - Announcement of the 10 award winners at the Data Innovation Summit
- 14th October** - Hyperight Nordic 100 in Data, Analytic and AI Award Ceremony



Why Apply or Nominate

- 1 Badge of Honor** - Being recognised as one of the Hyperight Nordic 100 In Data, Analytics and AI 2021 is a notable badge of honour for the individuals who make the cut. Leaders who have ranked among the 100 gain greater recognition and visibility in the industry and in their organisation.
- 2 Business Recognition** - The recognition as one of the Nordic 100 Data, Analytics and AI Leaders can get you greater business exposure and position you as a thought leader in the Data, Advanced Analytics and AI community. The recognition will also qualify your company as an attractive employer in the Data and Advanced Analytics industry.
- 3 Media Coverage** - Individuals featured in the Hyperight Nordic 100 In Data, Analytics and AI 2021 will get wide media coverage through our Hyperight and our Media Partner channels, website and weekly newsletter.
- 4 Award Opportunity** - Being included in the list also provides you with the opportunity to win an award by Hyperight announced at the Data Innovation Summit 2021 (www.datainnovationsummit.com).

Our Editorial Team



Ivana Kotorchevikj

Ivana Kotorchevikj is a Chief Editor at Hyperight.com - a digital media and information platform that enables data practitioners to share their knowledge and provides fresh articles, editorial pieces and interviews focused on the most innovative strategies, methodologies, case studies and solutions in Data, Advanced Analytics and AI. Ivana has 5+ years of content marketing and editorial experience in the tech industry and helps data practitioners dedicated to advancing data and analytics maturity and innovation, to share their stories and inspire the rest of the Data, Advanced Analytics and AI community.

Saranda Arifi

Saranda Arifi works as an Editorial Director at Hyperight AB, an event and media organisation dedicated to help organisations increase their maturity level of data innovation and AI utilisation, by creating platforms that encourage knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer networking and B2B collaboration. Saranda is involved in the overall intellectual creation, development, execution of existing and brand new conferences, project planning, project management and content strategy. She has experience in Project Management and Advisory Roles for Local and International Institutions.



Goran Cvetanovski

Goran Cvetanovski is Chief Editorial Director and Founder of Hyperight AB, an event and media organisation dedicated to help organisations increase their maturity level of data innovation and AI utilisation, by creating platforms that encourage knowl- edge sharing, peer-to-peer networking and B2B collaboration. Goran has 15 + years' experience in event management, research, guerrilla marketing, sales, and business development. He is a se- rial entrepreneur and investor in Event Tech, Remote Workforce and service start-ups active in the MICE industry.






CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Girish Agarwal

Chief Digital & Information Officer

PIAB

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

Completed bachelors in information technology and masters (MBA) in marketing and systems before starting to work as a consultant with IT setup and management within areas like supply chain, manufacturing, finance, sourcing, sales and marketing, human resources, product lifecycle management, etc. Have been responsible for solution and enterprise architecture across organisations with an emphasis on IT strategy and business processes. I have held various technology positions during the last few years for digital transformation and new business model adoption within the company concentrating upon platforms, data-driven services and AI. Having had the experience to start and scale Technology and Business Innovation Lab units, I am currently responsible for Digital and IT within Piab and also a PhD fellow at KTH-Stockholm researching how AI Technology is transforming value perception with customers and disrupting existing business models.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Technology is not interesting unless it drives value. With the advancements in digital during the last few decades, technology is enabling new capabilities and hence able to not only enable but also accelerate value offerings to both internal as well as external stakeholders to firms. Hence, using the IT & Digital department as a support function or only for PoC Innovation is an under-utilization of the capability. IT should rather be used as a core business function to enable and run business.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

A blend of Architectural & Business experience both in education and experience.
Research-oriented approach.
Leadership style to set up and inspire teams.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, DATA ENGINEERING

Lars Albertsson

Founder & Data Engineer

SCLING

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Background and current role

Lars Albertsson is the founder of Scling, a data engineering startup based in Stockholm. Scling provides data-value-as-a-service - customer-tailored data engineering, analytics, and data science. Lars is a frequent conference speaker on data engineering and data strategy. Before founding Scling, Lars has worked at Google, Spotify, Schibsted, and as an independent consultant, helping organisations create business value from data processing and machine learning.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Professionally, I am obsessed with data and engineering efficiency, fields where the high-tech elite companies run in circles around the rest of the world. Personally, I care about the two challenges of our generation: climate and the rise of anti-democratic populism. My mission is to bring the superpowers provided by efficient data handling and AI to a wider circle of socially and environmentally responsible companies that can contribute to building a sustainable society.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

When I joined Google in 2007, I got the opportunity to see into a future where data would be a differentiating factor. I also learnt how technical coordination can make even large companies highly efficient. At Spotify, I got the opportunity to work with data at scale, and I also picked up an agile toolbox, which has been remarkably useful to help my clients focus on value. As an entrepreneur, I have met many companies. What prevents them from obtaining more value from data is rarely technology, but the ability to coordinate, communicate, and collaborate across the company to make data flow and connect it to product improvements. This realisation drove me to found Scling, where we try a new collaborative model - data-value-as-a-service - to help our customers to get value from their data.





CATEGORY | APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Elin Allison

Head of New Product & Strategy, Data Insights

DIVISION X, TELIA COMPANY

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

Background in new product development within IT- & Telco from, for example, Hutchison Whampoa & Microsoft. Now at Telia's Division X, finding new ways to go from data to value in the real world. It can be finding new offerings where crowd movement data can help to fight the pandemic or to help Telia's customers use available data in new ways.

Quote

Data is just data until you make it mean something.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Data can give so many answers, but quite often, we forget what the question is. We have to be super focused on the problem to solve, to get real value out of data. In terms of leadership, transparency is one of my keywords. It goes for how I speak to my team, my peers and also to our customers. To gain and maintain trust, you need to be transparent. Lately, without a doubt, the greatest impact and what has shaped my entire journey is the Covid pandemic. In a constantly changing environment, me, my peers and my team have been able to broaden our Crowd Insights offering and Telia has been able to support our nordic authorities and regions with important insights in the fight against the virus.



CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Kye Andersson

Director Major Impact Initiatives

AI SWEDEN

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Background and current role

Kye's is responsible for Major Impact Initiatives with AI Sweden, currently focusing on accelerating applied AI in Swedish healthcare and Media & Democracy. He is also a delegate of the Swedish AI Council, as well as the Nordic AI Alliance, holds an innovation Grand Prix Winner from Cannes Lions, and has 20 years of experience in digital transformation, international advertising, PR, PA and product and service development.

He is convinced that AI will change our world more than any other technology we have seen before. That AI will save millions and improve the lives of billions. That AI will fundamentally impact health, food production, energy, business and creativity. Everywhere. Across the planet. AI will allow us to do things we haven't even thought were possible. He is a frequent public speaker and works regularly with international AI organisations and communities across Europe, North America, Asia and Africa.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

If you find a path without obstacles, it probably won't lead anywhere worthwhile. Life is uncomfortable, embrace the suck. Constantly think about how you could be doing things better and question yourself. We don't need to save the climate. It will be around after humans.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

20 years of digital innovation, and digital business development, constantly battling people's unwillingness to change. Innovation Grand Prix, Cannes Lions. A series of failures with projects, startups and company leadership in both Sweden and the US. Raising venture capital. Supporting startups. Recurring failures to see my own shortcomings and failing to understand the need for vulnerability and the need to ask for help. Personal development and 200+ hours of therapy. Children. Ultra Marathons. Gobbling up organisational psychology and development. Finally, embracing continuous change and the pain that goes with it.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, DATA ENGINEERING

Lotte Ansgaard Thomsen

Lead Big Data Engineer

GRUNDFOS

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

I have previously worked as a researcher at Yale University, investigating and analysing data from the research organization CERN. My tasks data at CERN included: triggers to filter for relevant data to store, data quality and data analysis. In these tasks, I have used different analysis strategies and ML methods to achieve the desired results. I spent more than 10 years working with the dataset from CERN, one of the largest in the world. During my work at CERN, I learned what is important to succeed in an end-to-end IoT/AI pipeline. Two years ago, I switched from my career in academia to a job at Grundfos. I wanted to apply my knowledge in an area that can help better the world. At Grundfos, I have contributed to the digitalisation transformation by creating guidelines for data pipelines, data quality and data architecture.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I believe in people and I believe in data, bring the two together and the world can be a better place.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Two years ago, I switched from working in academia to industry. In industry, digital transformation is a new discipline where a common understanding and a common language are built in the present years. At Grundfos, we wanted to create a common language for data handling. To achieve this, I led the project to create the Data Pipeline Playbook. The creation process was done in discussion and co-creation teams with Big Data Engineers. It was a fruitful process, and we managed to align data understanding and expectations. The process of creating the playbook also spawned a Data Pipeline Community open to a broader spectrum of people. The community and the common understanding between people with different insights have since been a catalyst to discuss data and data pipeline questions. We went from no common ground to a natural process of discussion to fulfil the disciplines outlined in the playbook.



CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Evelina Anttila

CEO & Co-Founder

JUSTIC

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

Evelina Anttila, Entrepreneur, Board Member of Stockholm AI and General Counsel & Public Affairs at Peltarion. Evelina is also a member of AI Sweden's Ethics and Legal Expert Groups. She has over ten years of experience working in business law and before joining Peltarion, she was a lawyer working both in Stockholm and NYC. Evelina is a diversity advocate and active in business, tech and AI forums in Europe, where she frequently speaks about AI ethics and policy matters. She also writes the weekly newsletter "AI Sweekly" on AI news from the Swedish AI scene and beyond.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Action speaks louder than words. Instead of just having opinions about things, do something about it! To contribute to the betterment of society has always been my driving force. I always try to ask myself: "what do I do to improve the situation, and what can I do?". Everyone can do something.



CATEGORY | AI, DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Anders
Arpteg

Director of Data Science
SWEDISH SECURITY SERVICE

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Background and current role

I have been working and researching AI for 20 years in academia and industry, with a Ph.D. in AI from Linköping University. Worked at Spotify for many years, using big data and machine learning techniques to optimize the user experience, and then headed up the research team at Peltarion to operationalize the latest AI techniques. Now working with the exciting goal to use data science and AI to defend the Swedish democracy and industry at the Swedish Security Service. Also a member of the AI Sweden steering committee, the Swedish AI Agenda, the European AI Alliance, and conferences such as ICML, ICLR, and JCP, and member of several advisory boards.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions


I am an extreme computer science nerd that has been programming since I was seven years old. Besides having a strong passion for AI and how it can help our society, I also have passions for the psychology of humans, building great teams, singing karaoke, dancing, and I also have a horrible taste in music.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Sahar
Asadi

AI Research Lead
KING

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Background and current role

Sahar is an AI research lead King where she drives AI research for the game. In her work at King, she leads research on how AI can support the creation and validation of content in game development. Her team has published a few papers from their recent work on the generalisation of RL in gameplay and applied research meeting industrial challenges in game development in collaboration with academics. Sahar has obtained her PhD in mobile robot olfaction from Applied Autonomous Sensor System, Orebro University. Throughout her 9-year-long industry journey, she got to apply research to real problems in many different domains: user activation and user understanding at Spotify, distributed deep learning at Clusterone, information retrieval and NLP at Meltwater, and product recognition at OculusAI. She is also one of the co-founders of the Women in Data Science (AI & ML) Sweden group, helping support the growth of a strong community of women in these fields.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Bringing AI research to product responsibly.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

My family who has always encouraged me to ask questions, stay ambitious and eager to learn new things. Not being afraid of changes and challenging myself to explore and stay out of my comfort zone. Community and network of amazing people that I have studied with or worked with during my journey. My 9 years of experience as an ML practitioner in the industry while staying continuously in touch with academia. Amazing researchers that I got to know and learned from during my participation in Robocup Soccer Simulation Competitions as a participant as well as organisers or being part of the technical committee.





CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Fredrik Backner

Chief Analytics Officer

KICKS

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

With 20 years of technology experience ranging from hands-on development to leading and building large analytics and tech teams, Fredrik has a rare combination of being hands-on while leading innovation and adoption of analytics and AI from board-level to stakeholder and end-user level.

In his current position as Chief Analytics Officer, he has, during the past two years transformed Kicks - the largest beauty retailer in the Nordics - into a fundamentally data-driven retailer. In his previous role as VP & Global Head of Data & Analytics at Telia Company, Fredrik built up a new business unit serving seven markets with AI products, analytics, platforms, and services.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

My professional passion is to turn new technology and analytics into concrete commercial benefits and wide adoption. My biggest private passion however, is to put on his skis and walk up any steep mountain, take a “fika” and ski back down again.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

In my current and previous roles, I am most proud of having built up two brand new business units and functions from scratch, catalyzing the business with fundamentally new tools and truly capitalizing on the “new oil” - AI-enabled data.

Lessons learned? Many! But the two biggest: Building analytics products is the ‘easy’ part. The hard work is to put it into use. Lots and lots of work, liaising, convincing, education and selling are needed. But when it happens, it is beautiful. And number two: Avoid on-prem at any length. You easily get 10x more done on the cloud. And you avoid some grey hair.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA ENGINEERING

Linda Borelius

Chief Partners Officer

SOLITA

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Background and current role

At Solita, we partner with the market-leading technology vendors and rising stars to accelerate our ability to continuously provide cutting edge solutions to our customers. It’s a large part of the way we serve our customers. In my current role as Chief Partners Officer, I’m responsible for leading and developing the partnerships we have with our selected technology vendors, including AWS, Google Cloud, Microsoft Azure, Snowflake, Tableau, Semarchy, Databricks, SoftwareAG, Boomi, MuleSoft and many more. This means making sure we have the right partners, as well as ensuring we have the right skills and ways of working to make these partnerships and implemented solutions a joint success together with our partners and customers.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I thrive on making customers – or people – successful using data! I put people at the centre of digital transformation, and I find it especially rewarding in situations where I get the opportunity to help customers with self-service analytics, data visualisation and data exploration, data democratisation, and data literacy. Simply because people who know the business, regardless of technical background, should be able to use data to answer their own questions.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I’m passionate about all things data and it’s been at the core of my work-life for over 20 years. I’ve worked hands-on with data as well as built successful consulting firms in the data services space. In 2012, I was one of the co-founders of Sparks, a boutique consultancy, where I was the CEO for 8 years until the company was acquired by Solita. One of my achievements has been building a successful partnership with Tableau and for that, we were recognised as the winner of Tableau EMEA Partner of the Year in 2019. In addition, I enjoy speaking at public events, and I give guest lectures at Stockholm University in data visualisation, storytelling with data and how to become data-driven. I want to inspire customers and colleagues, as well as the younger generation, to be creative with data!





CATEGORY | DATA ENGINEERING, INNOVATION

Mina Boström Nakićenović

Chief Technology Officer

PARADOX INTERACTIVE

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

I am a passionate technology and business leader with 20+ years of experience in software development. I work as a Chief Technology Officer at Paradox Interactive, and I am also a regular conference speaker. My main aim is to deliver high business value, which I manage by being at the intersection of technology and business. My strong technical background combined with my agile leadership skills, deep understanding of business strategies and great passion for systematic approaches to innovation make my leadership style successful. As a helicopter pilot, I'm always switching back and forth between the big (visionary) and the detailed picture. I always try to maintain a good balance between strategic and tactical solutions. My experience comes mainly from the financial and gaming industry. As being one of the early Agile adopters in 2001, since then I have always been inspired by agile and lean methodologies in everything that I do: leadership, architecture design, technical roadmap.

Apart from my big passion for technology, I have also developed a big interest in innovation management, business strategies and leadership. I have created unique perspectives stemming from my 20+ years of experience on how software architecture, strategy and leadership intersect and how to leverage them for innovation and competitive advantage.

History has been one of my biggest interests since I was a child. Strategic thinking and software development are now my big passions. In the intersection of these three domains are Paradox Interactive games! As Paradox's CTO, I drive technology strategy & roadmap, aligning different technology functions across the company. My key stakeholders are 10+ Paradox game studios, product and business development teams. My core responsibilities are establishing the company's technology vision, executing on it and running technology departments like Publishing Platform, DevOps, Data Engineering, BI and IT. As a CTO I own the strategy for keeping the company on the technology curve, able not merely to adapt to disruptions but also to anticipate them and turn them to the organisation's strategic, operational and competitive advantages.

I hold a PhLic in Computer Science. In 2016 I was honoured to be awarded 3rd best software engineer in Sweden by IDG TechWorld, and in 2019 I was recognised as one of 100 female thought-leaders worldwide by Lean in Agile (LIA).

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm a true bookworm. I always use all my knowledge gained from different books (prose, fantasy, poetry, philosophy, history, art) and combine it with my strong technical experience and creativity in order to add new values both to the things that I work with as well as for people in my surrounding - regardless if it is at work, at home or for the community. Reading books helps me with inspiration, creativity and abstract thinking. Learning, teaching and opening new perspectives for other people is a part of my personal life mission. I have the ability to combine existing things in new ways. Therefore I like finding new, different and innovative solutions for many things. As a former athlete, a swimmer, I have endurance, and I don't give up easily, not even when it's tough. The philosopher Lucius Seneca said: "It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare. It is because we do not dare they become difficult". I dare to do things. I also follow through, do things properly and get things done. Since I have a genuine interest in technology, business and leadership, a curiosity to learn new perspectives and a need to share knowledge and ideas with others, I became a regular conference speaker and an active contributor to European Agile communities. My passion for agile software development has also spread within my family. My husband Gustav and I apply a Total Leadership concept, where we combine together our work, family, community and personal development. Hence we often bring our three kids to conferences, where we present together as an agile family. Although I received several recognitions and awards during my career, for me, the greatest reward is when I am standing on the stage together with one of my sons and when we present our ideas together and when we feel and see the "a-ha!" moment in other people's eyes.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I must start with my mom, who was a women engineer and a great role model for me. As a true engineer, she taught me, by example, that women can really enjoy technology and engineering. Next, I was also always surrounded by knowledgeable and inspiring people, already starting at my Mathematical Gymnasium (Belgrade), which had an ahead-of-time educational approach for developing motivation and skills in mathematics, physics and programming. It continued at my workplaces, where I was lucky to have several great leaders as managers. I learned a lot from them and got inspirations that improved and shaped my leadership skills.

One of the biggest contributions to my professional development came from attending conferences. By attending different conferences and by being a part of several inspiring worldwide software development and business communities, I learned a lot, got inspiration from amazing people, contributed with my ideas to the community and got feedback which helped me with my further development (both professionally and as a person). Another big trigger in my career was the Chief Architect course by Dataföreningen Kompetens, where I learned how to work efficiently at the intersection of business and technology. Even my personal surroundings contribute a lot to my professional development. I am lucky to have an extremely supportive husband who is, at the same time, the strictest professional reviewer which I have ever had. When I take his feedback into account and improve my work, it often results in an award!

Last but not least - I learned a lot about business and leadership through my competitive swimming. How to persevere and not give up, how to work with my goals (both mid and high level) and how to find the best strategy to achieve them.



CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Anders Bresell

Head of Data

TELENOR CONNEXION AB

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

I am an engineer with a Ph D in the area of Data Science and Machine learning. Started my career in pharmaceutical R&D. Spent a few years as a management consultant, but has since 2015 thrived in the data-savvy IoT business and global mobile connectivity. In my career, I have architected numerous data solutions, led teams across many generations of big data and cloud platforms and deployed plenty of ML models into production.

My current role is Head of Technology Development & Data Science, a role that has two main responsibilities. The development part is about leading the cloud software engineering teams, owning the agile development process, devops and development policies. It also implies formal management of 15-35 team members including contractors. The other part is about leading the team that builds and manages our real-time big data platform including the data scientist serving the business with insights.

Furthermore, I am part of the Telenor Connexion Architect Board, Special Solution Board, the CTO-leadership group and I am the company's leading expert in data analytics. I present at conferences both nationally and internationally and serve the public by hosting webinars and crafting whitepapers.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Staying at the forefront of AI, Data architecture best practice and serverless microservice paradigms is not only a passion of mine, but also a key to delivering actionable insights to business and customers at scale. It is always awesome to see mind-boggling volumes of real-time data feeding your analytics environment, but it is when you really make a difference to the business that makes it all worth it and gives you meaning at the end of the week. My philosophy has always been to build analytics capabilities to meet any unforeseen demand, a strategy that paid off in plenty of business value that makes me tremendously proud of what my teams have accomplished over the years.

My favourite quote is not much of an insight, nor wisdom. It just the plain statement: DATA IS MAGIC

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Throughout my career, I have been working for and with, many great leaders which gave me many valuable insights around building and managing successful teams, influencing senior management and driving the data agenda.

My first mentor was Dr Bo Serenius, a nationally recognized thought-leader in bioinformatics during my undergraduate studies. He taught me how industrial R&D could drive insights at scale and that large corporates play an important role in improving our society. My second mentor was Dr Jonas Häggström that showed me the power and importance of attracting Rockstar talents and making them grow to their full potential. My third mentor was Dr James Weatherall, a rock star data scientist himself. James was and still is a true role model and also had a significant impact on my leadership ambitions. My current mentor Martin Whitlock, CTO of Telenor Connexion, truly supports me in driving the AI and Data agenda. His argument is not that he wants to help out fulfilling my career ambitions, he does this because he is convinced the company needs it and that I am the person to lead it. The balance of company targets and motivation of individuals to accomplish something great together is a common theme that my mentors have instilled in me.


My leadership philosophy is to be genuine and respectful to everyone, and it is founded in an inherent and honest motivation to make a positive impact on the business and sector I work in. It is often said that customers should always be your focus, but I argue that supporting other parts of your business and making other teams and departments empowered to deliver customer and business value is of equal importance. I believe that all of us data experts have an ethical obligation to make the world better. However, this can be accomplished in many ways, but it should have society, sustainable business and long-term customer value as key drivers.

As experts and leaders in data, we owe it to people around us to make sure that we always strive to make an impact where it matters most. This means that not only do we support those teams' around us, but we also need to extend our frontiers of influence by constantly making sure that we have the right context to make appropriate priorities where to make the most impact. Skilled data leaders are a scarce resource on this planet, and because of that each and every one of us experts needs to push our influential capabilities to empower others, so our team can accomplish more than the sum of individual experts.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, INNOVATION

Alessandro Canossa

Associate Professor / Czar of Player Experience / Senior Consultant
ROYAL DANISH ACADEMY - ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, CONSERVATION / MODL.AI / MASSIVE ENTERTAINMENT
 Click to view profile

Background and current role

Alessandro has a humanistic background (MA in Communication Science), quickly appears on the decadent stage of advertisement in the late nineties, and finally finds his vocation-obsession in game development (ITE, NDS, LEGO). In 2004 he founded the game development studio Tabula Rasa and received support from EU Media Desk. In September 2009, he obtained a Ph.D. in cooperation with IO Interactive (Square Enix) and Denmark’s School of Design. He now dwells at the crossroads of industry and academia, weaving psychology, data science and design to understand players’ behaviour, motivations and personality. While chasing occult behavioural patterns, he was at the IT University of Copenhagen (2009-2012), Northeastern University in Boston (2013-2016), then as director of data insights at Massive Entertainment, a Ubisoft Studio (2017-2019). He is now an associate professor at the Royal Danish Academy and Czar of Player experience at Modl.ai.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Alessandro loves reading, writing, breathing, diving, travelling, cooking, playing, painting, seeing, drawing and skiing. But mostly breathing. He secretly dreams of a parallel life as a marine biologist studying the mimetic properties of cuttlefish.


Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Travelling. I have been to 49 countries, lived for extended periods in Sydney, London, Boston, Torino, Copenhagen and Malmo. Each of these experiences has given me more concrete skills than any management training I have ever taken.



CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Silvia A. Carretta

Lawyer / Doctoral candidate in AI & Law
UPPSALA UNIVERSITY / WASP-HS
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Background and current role

I’m a qualified lawyer specialised in intellectual property, founder of the IP and Tech lab firm. Now a doctoral candidate in AI & Law at Uppsala University, I’m also affiliated with the Wallenberg foundation’s WASP-HS graduate school. My research studies the impact of upcoming technology shifts on society, in particular, how to regulate the legal accountability of autonomous AI systems. I bring on my shoulder a background of different cultural perspectives, having studied and worked in Italy, Spain, the USA, and now Sweden. On the side, I’m part of the core team of Women in AI Sweden with the role of Growth Lead. Also, I co-founded the Foreign Lawyers Network, a non-profit aiming to broaden diversity and inclusion in the legal field in Sweden.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I enjoy multicultural and diverse environments. I spend most of my spare time volunteering with different associations to share my experience and to sponsor the importance of tolerance, inclusivity, equality in making the world better. Also, a tireless reader, passionate about new technologies, music, and everything that lies in between.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

My past experiences include different cultural perspectives, having lived in Italy, Spain, USA, and Sweden. The file rouge that connects them all is my passion to work toward creating a more just and inclusive world.

At work, I have the opportunity to research and lecture to raise awareness around the importance of regulating AI to prevent discrimination of minorities and promote inclusivity. In my spare time, I try to make a change as Growth Lead of Women in AI-Sweden, a non-profit do-tank working towards gender-inclusive AI, by creating a research ecosystem to benefit society and organising mentorship programs for young professionals.

Furthermore, with the aim to broaden diversity and inclusion in the legal profession, I co-founded the Foreign Lawyers Network, a non-profit that unites the community of foreign professionals living in Sweden. Finally, a reality I’m very close to is AFS-Intercultura, where I have volunteered for 14 years, to help students develop from a young age the skills needed to be more open-minded and respectful of different cultures.



CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Victoria Chudinov

Data Scientist

DIXA

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

I currently am involved with the intricate and nitty-gritty details of building a passable natural language system at Dixa, together with all the surrounding infrastructure to support it. In previous positions, I have worked with using machine learning and data science in railroad and transportation at the DSB Digital Labs, and speech to text models in Corti. My background is in developmental psychology and AI, and my research interests are in language technology, cybernetics, planning and artificial life.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

An AI engineer, a cybernetician, a swordswoman, a dancer and a goofy nerd walk into a bar. "What will it be tonight Vicky?" the barman asks.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Oh god, so many. Having the opportunity to experience work in both established corporation and startups definitely ranks up there. My personal experience as a fencing instructor and event organiser helped too. And countless conversations with mentors and friends, books, lectures. Like we all get there, really.

And when you draw the line, when it all comes back together, is one lesson - the system is what it does and not what it says it does. Whether that system is a human, or an organisation or anything, how it actually works is often very different from how that system says it works. And that is the most important element in understanding it and changing it.



CATEGORY | AI

Patrick Couch

Business Developer Data & AI

SOLITA SWEDEN

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Background and current role

I just wrapped up ten years at IBM, where I've spent the past number of years helping clients derive benefit from IBM's AI portfolio (branded Watson). As a business developer, speaker and spokesperson for IBM, my main responsibility has been to act as an educator, communicator and advisor to organisations navigating the fast-moving and challenging but promising AI landscape.

Prior to IBM and my professional career within IT, I pursued an academic career at Stockholm University and wrote my Master Thesis on human-machine boundary-blurring within the fictional context of the writings of sci-fi author William Gibson.

As the real-world technological underpinnings that set up the wizardry of applied AI mature, the very concrete challenges they bring with them increase and questions previously relegated to the realm of fiction (such as bias, ethics, privacy & education) take center stage in a business context. This is my field of operation.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

The ongoing digitalisation of every aspect of our lives and society offers us a forward escape into the future and a resolution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals in one fell swoop. But only if we think clearly about this opportunity and address it appropriately and inclusively. And I'm passionate about this!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I was fortunate enough to be born in the 70s into a family with a strong, independent mother, an absent anti-establishment freewheeling American army deserter dad, both older and younger brothers and at the end of the line of a bus route in a then undeveloped suburb of Stockholm. This context provided a lot of formative and cognitive freedom.

Also, I got early into such diverse things as computers, music and sports. The ZX Spectrum was my first computer, Jimi Hendrix my first musical love and track & field my first brush with organised sports. By the time I hit the university, I was a philosophically open-minded, tech-savvy (I thought) youth.

When I exited the university in the late 90s, I landed in the epicentre of the dot.com boom and found myself recruited by a friend of mine into a small internet start-up. This launched my professional career within IT.

So you could say, I've been shaped by a series of gratuitous graces.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI

Frances K. D'Silva

Product Manager, Data & insights

NETS

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

Born and raised in Mumbai, I started out as a software programmer in 1982 in Mumbai. Since then, my different roles in public and private sector organisations have given me unique insights into the increasing value of data in every aspect of society. The judicious use of data is a vital element in driving digitalisation and enabling data-driven decisions.

As a product manager for Data & Insights at Nets, I work with new data concepts and analytics together with Nets' customers and government authorities in Norway. As a member of the virtual data management team, my work also involves growing awareness of the strategic use of data and establishing data governance practices across Nets.

Earlier this year, I joined Nets' Diversity & Inclusion board, an initiative for ensuring inclusion across Nets. I look forward to making a difference together with the team.

Outside Nets, I am chair and an active member of the Norwegian Computer Society's Business Intelligence & Analytics board, an initiative that a few data enthusiasts and I started up in 1999.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

A Norwegian Indian mum and wife who loves gardens and gardening and is passionate about making data work for the betterment of society.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

A disciplined approach to acquiring and sustaining knowledge throughout a career is something I grew up with. I saw my father, an aeronautical engineer, continuously training and certifying on new types of aircraft and engines.

An open dialogue with my team is vital to me as a person and leader. Leadership training, courses at Copenhagen Business School and BI (Norwegian Business School), and certifications like EUCIP, SFAE POPM are part of having formal training that is important as a leader.

Participation in open forums like Meetups and Slack groups and my role in the Norwegian Computer Society are valuable. They have given me the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from professionals across different industries, both in the Nordics and around the world.



CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI, DATA ENGINEERING

Erik Dahlberg

Co-founder / Machine Learning Expert

MODULAI

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

I'm one of the co-founders of Modulai (modulai.io). We develop end-to-end ML/AI systems for clients in various industries. Along with developing the company, I lead ML projects and develop ML systems in CV, NLP, recommender systems, supervised / unsupervised learning.

I have an MSc in physics from KTH and almost a BSc in business from Stockholm University. I spent a couple of years working as a statistical analyst at the end of the 2000s.

I have been working in the ML field since 2010, when I joined Klarna, where I developed the first credit models using ML methods. In early 2012, I did my long-postponed master thesis at CERN in Geneva, using ML methods to try to detect the Higgs boson in data from the ATLAS detector as the final part of my MSc, which was an extremely exciting experience. I then went back to work for Klarna and went on to lead teams and projects within primarily ML applied to credit and fraud risk while spending a lot of time coding, data engineering and developing the architecture for the ML system (now called MLOps). Having become the Lead Data Scientist, I left Klarna at the end of 2017. In early 2018, I co-founded Modulai together with Puya Sharif and Josef Lindman Hörnlund, two of my ex-colleagues from Klarna, based on our common passion for ML/AI.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm passionate about actually solving real-world problems that matter for people's lives and make things better in general through the application of ML/AI.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

1. Becoming a father is probably the one most important thing
2. Co-founding and developing a company together with others.
3. Working in a fast-growing start-up company (Klarna) for 8 years with many talented people was very inspiring. It has shaped me, especially the experiences leading engineers and ML engineers to reinvent the whole ML architecture.
4. Teaching.
5. Doing my master thesis work at CERN, working with the community that discovered the Higgs boson in 2012, was very inspiring.
6. Going on a year exchange to the US when I was in high school was a transformative experience.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Prayson Wilfred Daniel

Principal Data Scientist

ITELLIGENCE

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Background and current role

Building innovative ML solutions with a strong focus on Microservice Architectures and taking into consideration Unit and Integration Testing in CD/CI's DevOps pipelines is what I do in my current role. I hold an MSc. in Information Technology & Persuasive Design from Aalborg University and am driven to help stakeholders take the front seat of the ML and AI revolution.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am here to help companies gain AI competitive advantage by growing revenue, slashing production timelines, multiplying efficiency, and making data-driven decisions.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

People and self-management. I love the dialogues and exchanges of ideas. Learning how to communicate in a way that you put others first, through listening and actively being interested in their journeys has changed how I work. Mentoring junior data scientists has also opened my eyes to give more than I receive. My greatest joy comes when I see others achieve their goals.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, AI

Ellie Dobson

Director Applications Product

GRAPHCORE

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Background and current role

Ellie has 15 years of experience building data-driven solutions in engineering organisations. She is a particle physicist by training, having worked as part of the Higgs discovery team at CERN. She has worked for the past decade for software companies in a variety of industries, but with a focus on the application of advanced analytics and digitalisation to engineering disciplines. She is currently working as a product manager overseeing applications at GraphCore, a British company that develops accelerators for AI.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I was told many years ago to follow what is interesting, and that everything else will fall into place naturally. That advice has served me well over the years.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


During my Ph.D., I learned that even the hardest problems can be solved upon realising that a big problem is just a series of smaller problems stitched together. If you can figure out how to break a problem down into a set of smaller problems, then that is half the problem solved already. Upon leaving academia and embarking on a job in the industry, I fairly quickly realised that, in many cases, done is better than perfect.



CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Patrick Eckemo

Digitization and Innovation Manager
BOLAGSVERKET

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Background and current role

Throughout the last 24 years, I have developed a technical and business acumen focusing on result, innovation and business value both as a leader and an expert. I've built information management teams, BI/analytics & master data competency centres, EA functions and delivered several government assignments within AI, emerging technologies and innovation. Today I'm a senior advisor and a devoted civil servant at the Agency for digital government (DIGG). I'm part of the AI work in Sweden at the national level as within the EU. I'm also a board member of IoT Sweden. My main focus in the latest years has been on creating the right prerequisites for using AI within the public administration in a sustainable manner. The current focus is on the national digital program, data strategy and C19 vaccination card.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm visionary, strategic, innovative, dedicated and result oriented. I'm convinced that AI is a prerequisite for Sweden's future competitiveness and welfare. My vision is that Sweden will have the strongest AI eco-systems in the world and an AI competence centre within the public administration.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


Working as both an expert and a leader in IT and business development in several industries and areas has given me a holistic and deep understanding that is very useful and important to me. Every delivery has taught me something. I believe in challenging the current way of working and the status quo. I also believe in people and their competencies/abilities.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, INNOVATION

Vanessa Eriksson

SVP, Chief Digital Officer
ZENSEACT

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Background and current role

A data practitioner with several years' experience in Data Management Strategies, Data Innovation, Compliance & Data Security, Vanessa Eriksson works alongside engineers in the Autonomous Driving areas as she continues to build her skills in advanced analytical capabilities to promote business value.

Currently, a Member of the Board at Fidesmo, having previously been the Chair of PwC's CDO Advisory Board in 2017/18 and on Gartner's EMEA and The America's Data & CDO Advisory Boards between 2012 & 2017. As SVP, Chief Digital Officer at Zenseact, Vanessa has a clear mission to lead the company even further into the digital age. As part of the leadership team, Vanessa reports to the CEO & successfully defined & delivered a mesh data strategy to the organisation as part of her '100 days on the job'.

Vanessa's previous experience (2014 - 2020) includes Chief Data Officer at Nets, Chief Data Officer Advisor EMEA at PwC and Chief Data Officer at Telia.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

A purpose-driven data professional & experienced public speaker, I hold a proven track record in influencing key decision-makers. Results-oriented, my leadership skills include communication, motivating teams and credibility. Women in Leadership and Gender Diversity are topics that are close to me.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

My leadership journey began while still in school, in class 9. I wasn't the ideal student, often found kneeling in front of the principal's office for disobeying, talking back or worse. One day the Principal informed me that as per tradition, the teachers voted for the 'Head Girl' and although no one had voted for me, as the Principal of the school, she still decided to make me Head Girl. A clever nun; her plan worked and I cannot thank her enough for putting me on the right path. I truly believe that's when it all changed for me as I quickly realised I couldn't continue the way I had, the younger students looked up to me & I had to set an example. This lesson stayed with me and has helped me be the leader I am today. A mother of 3 girls, I am passionate about encouraging Girls in Tech & successfully launched my brainchild, the first GiT event in 2017. I continue to drive this project forward & am currently associated with 4 large organisations that support & promote my cause.




CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Anna Felländer

Founder

AI SUSTAINABILITY CENTER

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Background and current role

Anna Felländer is the founder of the AI Sustainability Center. She is one of Sweden's leading experts on the effects of digitalization on organizations, society, and the economy, and has published a number of reports on the subject, including topics such as e-commerce, FinTech, the sharing economy, and the role of AI in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Most recently, Anna was the Chief Economist and Digital Economist at Swedbank. Prior to that, she worked within the Swedish government for ten years, both at the Ministry of Finance and the Prime Minister's office. She has been a Senior Advisor to the Minister of Digitalization, Affiliated Faculty at the Royal Institute of Technology, as well as a Board member at AI startups. Anna holds a Master's degree in Macroeconomics from the Stockholm School of Economics.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am passionate about helping organizations activate the real power of AI. That is, enabling ethical and sustainable choices in this data-driven AI era. Privacy intrusion, discrimination, lost autonomy and social exclusion are examples of negative consequences when AI is being implemented without an ethical and societal filter. No organization can rely on compliance alone: technology is always ahead of legislation. Every organization therefore must make a choice based on who they are, what they believe in and how those choices affect people and society. I believe we are at a crossroad. Do we let technology lead us or will we lead technology? I founded the AI Sustainability Center with the mission to help deploy AI that safeguards universal human rights in a way that's true to organization's values and brand while maintaining compliance with existing and upcoming regulation. Digitalization is entering a new form. From a high degree of transparency and customer influence to an efficient, but black box, decision and recommendation. Just as new business models have realized value, they now need to be updated towards a new reality. The AI Sustainability Center wants to see a new business model for increased trust and an updated Corporate Social Responsibility in the data-driven AI era.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I am a macroeconomist with a focus on how digitalization is affecting society, individuals and the economy. I spent eight years at the Swedish Ministry of Finance and during the financial crisis I worked at the Prime Minister's Crisis Management Office. I was Chief Economist at Sweden's largest retail bank, as well as Digital Economist. During that time I engaged in research and advising the government on the positive and negative externalities from data driven technologies and AI. I have also been affiliated to the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) initiating multidisciplinary research on AI Ethics. For example, in collaboration with KTH, MIT, and multiple AI experts, we published findings on the role of artificial intelligence in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals in Nature Communications. In 2018 I founded the AI Sustainability Center. Together with multidisciplinary research teams from world-leading academic institutes, public and private organizations, and cutting edge tech scale ups, we provide tools, methods, and frameworks for sustainable and ethical AI. Together, we help organizations work proactively and systematically to address ethical and societal risks so they can stay competitive in this data-driven AI era, build trust among their users, bring new products to faster market acceptance, avoid reputational risk, and stay ahead of regulation. For me, reflecting on my career, the magic always happens outside of my comfort zone. Cross fertilizing academic fields and experts from different sectors spurs creativity. I believe in the Nordic approach combining values with sustainable business models and I am dedicated to bringing ethical questions on the top of the agenda.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI

Anders Forsberg

Cloud Transformation Lead

SWEDBANK

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Background and current role

I have always been interested in technology. As a kid, it was about scouting for the latest tech components to build top-notch gaming PC's to make my friends jealous. I wasn't so interested in how the technology worked, but more what you could do with it and if and by how much it actually improved the overall performance. After a while, I ended up helping friends and relatives to buy and build and maintain their PCs. I guess this is where I found my interest in helping people and later organisations with how to choose, buy, assemble technology in the right way so that it fits their purpose. Professionally, I started as a Management Consultant and continued my "tech advice" work but in a professional setting. After 7 years of advisory, I wanted to move to the business side and do things for real and be the bridge between business problem solving and technology enablement and data. In the role of Senior BI & Advanced Analytics Chief Product Owner & Business Architect, now Head of BI Architecture in Swedbank, I have a long experience of building high performing agile value streams/teams and advanced decision support platforms for both traditional BI and leading-edge AI & ML application development and operations.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

My passion has never been technology itself, rather what you can do with it. Today, and in the field of Analytics, it's all about the ability to execute at scale. This means a lot more than technology enablement, which of course, is a fundamental must-have. I am rarely impressed by new technology as it rarely addresses enterprise challenges in creating value out of data. To create value out of data, an organisation needs to establish end-to-end Analytics ability to execute. That's all that matters and that includes a lot more than buying and installing cool technology. The need for compliance, talent management, active business stakeholder engagement, leadership and of course all of the traditional IT management skills and in particular high level of data management maturity are all key success factors and something that never gets finished.

If data is the new oil, then it is increasingly available to all organisations at an increasingly lower and lower cost. But few organisations have or are able to establish the capability of producing petrol out of their oil in an "environmentally" compliant and scalable way so that it actually creates customer value. Helping the organisation to establish that is my professional passion.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Besides the usual of being visible, engaged, surrounding yourself with people more skilled than yourself etc., I have found one thing to be a real key success factor that is rarely talked about and often completely missing in internal leadership programs.

The focus on leadership is almost always focused on the vertical leadership perspective, i.e. goal setting, performance evaluation, developing coaching skills, shared values, ensuring the line management responsibilities of your employees etc. All of those are, of course, very important, but leaders are also expected to drive change in an organisation. Anyone with any experience of that would recognise that the main challenge is rarely in the vertical in an organisation but almost always in the horizontal, i.e. how do you as a leader become good at working together with other leaders in the other parts of the organisation? How do you align goals that often are conflicting, at least short term? How do you "sell" your ideas to others that for natural reasons don't have the same insight as you in your own field, and how do you ensure you know enough about the nature of your colleagues' challenges in other parts of the organisation to find the synergies between your change agenda and theirs? I can only speak for the Analytics field, but to improve a business using Analytics, it has to start in the business and end in the business. Having the greatest data platform that nobody uses in the business is of little value but very costly. This is, in my experience, why so many organisations struggle with moving from a small POC or Pilot case to making Analytics a natural part of their business development agenda. As a leader, this horizontal "leadership" is what I focus 90% of my time on. I have lots of fantastic people in my unit who implement, develop, deploy and operate data pipelines, insights, business BI services and handle all the technical stuff surrounding it, but they are only able to do that at scale if I, as a leader can provide them with the prerequisites which often involves the cross-functional leadership buy-in. This is my main job as a leader, as I see it.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Salla Franzén

Data and Analytics Director Pricing
IKEA RETAIL (INGKA GROUP)

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Background and current role

Salla Franzén has been the Group Chief Data Scientist at SEB since 2017. She leads a team of data scientists and visualisation experts, inspiring and enabling the bank to become more data-driven. She is involved in many academic initiatives and a co-supervisor for an industrial PhD student in anomaly detection in WASP. Salla is also the coordinator for the industry path of the AI agenda for Sweden, and a guest columnist for Realtid.se. Salla has a PhD in theoretical mathematics. Salla worked as an analyst at a hedge fund prior to joining SEB in 2011. She started her career at SEB as a risk analyst, became the Head of the equity index funds at SEB Investment management AB and has also worked within SEB Private banking and counterparty risk modelling.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Data can transform not just businesses but also the minds of people. What really makes me excited is all the new creative opportunities to make things even better! Start small, grow ideas and dare to let data show the way.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Leadership today is encouraging others to dare to try new things in order to grow. When teaching undergraduate students in mathematics, I realised that the most important task was to emphasise the joy of mathematics. The students that found joy became engaged and learned more, and I was voted best teacher for a course I held, one of my proudest moments in life.


Working in finance, I have the opportunity, together with my team and colleagues, to lead the organisation to understand the value of data and of being data-driven. Seeing how people embark on their data journey and start to enjoy change is great. Leading is encouraging collaboration, leaving space for individuality and allowing for creativity. Sometimes the most unconventional ideas are the ones that lead to the best solutions!



CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Mattias Fras

Group Head of AI Hub
NORDEA

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Background and current role

I graduated with a Master of Financial Economics from Gothenburg School of Economics & Commercial Law in 1998. I went straight into management consulting at the intersection of strategy and operations. I have spent 20+ years since then working with change in large corporates across many industries, divided between 12 years in management consulting, 4 years as CFO and 7 years driving new tech adoption in Nordea. In the last part of my career, I have focused on leveraging new technology such as software robotics, virtual agents and machine learning / deep learning. AI am currently driving AI strategy in Nordea and supporting business leveraging data and ML, focusing on building data-driven organisation using AI-related solutions in Hub & Spoke manner. Acting as a translator between business and technology.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Passionate business-to-tech-to-business translator who has taken the Matrix’s “red pill” in search of purpose and opportunities to make life better using AI in a human-centric way. Excited to accelerate the rate of learning for people in general, and developing Nordea and its people in the area of AI in particular.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

12 years in management consulting working with change in large corporates taught me the complexity of making a true impact and the importance of investing in people and adoption. As line manager (CFO in Nordea Life & Pension Sweden), working within leadership in a growing company in a regulated environment helped me understand the inside work and challenges of running and developing an organisation at the same time. Bringing in new technology into large corporate to solve problems has made me realise the fundamental difference in driving change compared to before. The fact that technology itself is only a tool, and that the real challenge is to make people understand the potential power, and make them desire the change. It is really all about changing people and cultural transformation is key to making people want to change. The fairly recent advancements and accessibility of technology and data to all are pushing us to rethink problem-solving across many dimensions in a bank like Nordea as in all companies. This is changing what it takes to be successful as a corporation and an individual from now and into the future. I am truly passionate about the emerging characteristics of leaders in these new times as well as the reskilling and new mindset change needed in the workforce.



CATEGORY | AI, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Diego Galar

Professor
LULEÅ UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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Background and current role

Dr. Diego Galar is Full Professor of Condition Monitoring in the Division of Operation and Maintenance Engineering at LTU, Luleå University of Technology where he is working with different aspects of cyber physical systems, Industry 4.0, IoT or Industrial AI and Big Data. He was also involved in the SKF UTC centre located in Luleå focused on SMART bearings and also actively involved in national projects with the Swedish industry or funded by Swedish national agencies like Vinnova. He is also principal researcher in Tecnia (Spain), heading the Maintenance and Reliability research group within the Division of Industry and Transport. He has authored more than five hundred journal and conference papers, books and technical reports in the field of maintenance, working also as member of editorial boards, scientific committees and chairing international journals and conferences and actively participating in national and international committees for standardization and R&D in the topics of reliability and maintenance. In the international arena, he has been visiting Professor in the Polytechnic of Braganza (Portugal), University of Valencia and NIU (USA) and the Universidad Pontificia Católica de Chile. Currently, he is visiting professor at the University of Sunderland (UK), University of Maryland (USA), and Chongqing University in China.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I realised ten years back that Industry 4.0 was going to transform the world we know. Artificial intelligence was emerging as a consequence of the 4th industrial revolution. Developing and implementing AI-based solutions for enhanced analytics in industrial contexts even though it is challenging and requires a good understanding. Since then, my main goal is to support the industry which is struggling in selecting appropriate approaches when developing AI-based solutions, and at the same time avoiding hype-based implementation to retain efficiency and effectiveness. However, to strengthen industry's capability to develop AI-based solutions and boost the implementation of AI-tools, I believe that there is need to provide a holistic, simplified, and comprehensive description of artefacts that are relevant and can be integrated to master implementation of AI-solutions at the same time we protect the industry from fake tech pastors and false data science prophets.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


Triggering innovation for the industry and getting it adopted is always a challenge. Industry, in general, is a conservative sector and I noticed long ago the gap between academia and the industrial reality. My father worked for many years in general Motors and he always tried to make me think about the connection between innovation and real industry. We call it the death valley and it refers to the gap between researchers and practitioners. That is why during my twenty years of experience with MRO and the last ten years with data science, IIoT and industrial AI in Sweden, I did my best to leverage the knowledge of the companies, adopting and scaling up solutions as fast as they can. Unfortunately, many times researchers and academicians do not touch the ground and do not realise that technology is there, but adoption is difficult due to many constraints, especially the human factor and the resistance to the change. In this regard, I consider essential the duty of technology evangelists and dissemination activities in order to help industrial people with the adoption and "digestion" of the technology. It is true that I have published a number of methods, research findings and success stories, but it is also true that more than that, what is relevant is to convince us about the usability of those findings. In summary, my experience in companies like Volvo, Trafikverket or Boliden was clear, let us help them to co-create a solution industry and academia and do not try to impose your thoughts. R&D in AI is fast and achievements are promising. However, adoption and scalability are far behind.



CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING, AI, APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Ather Gattami

Head of Research
AI SWEDEN

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Background and current role

Dr. Ather Gattami grew up in Lund, Sweden. He holds Master of Science degrees in both Engineering Physics and Mathematics from Lund University. He was mentioned as the first "Gemstone Student" and graduated as the youngest and fastest engineering student in Sweden, which was awarded the prestigious prize of "Extraordinary Achievements" at Lund University. He did his Master's at Caltech in 2003. Dr. Gattami pursued his PhD studies at Lund University, and he graduated as the fastest and youngest PhD in engineering in 2007. He worked at MIT as a research associate in 2008 and joined KTH during 2009-2012 as an assistant professor. Dr. Gattami served as a Senior Researcher at Ericsson Research from 2012-2015 where he was leading the Emerging Technologies team for the 5th generation (5G) communication system. He holds over 20 international patents. In 2017-2021, he served as a senior AI expert at RISE (Research Institutes of Sweden) AI. He is currently Head of Research at AI Sweden. His research interests are within the mathematical foundations of Machine Learning in general and Deep Learning in particular, Reinforcement Learning, learning in dynamical systems and games, and low-rank matrix approximation and completion problems, with applications to recommender systems, anomaly detection, predictive maintenance, and Natural Language. He is also the founder and co-founder of the AI-driven companies OrganAi.se and Aibetic, respectively.

Quote

Creative person who works hard and always gets intrigued by the hard problems.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


I have been leading research efforts in academia, large companies, startups, research institutes and also founded startups with AI-driven products. This gave me a complete view of AI from multiple perspectives and a unique understanding. I have also run AI-podden, a podcast focusing on AI in practice which gave exposure to over 100 companies and institutions working with AI.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, AI, APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Nima Ghorbani

Head of Technology
SWEDBANK

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Background and current role

High-performing executive, a passionate people developer and curious technologist with extensive experience in the digital space and hands-on transformation journeys leveraging exponential thinking and disruptive technologies, especially Data Science, Machine Learning/Deep Learning and Artificial Intelligence.

Currently, Nima is the Head of Technology for Anti Financial Crime, Data Science & Applied AI and Cyber Security - managing the Swedbank technology investment plan, a team of 150 Developers, SW Engineers, Data Scientists, Machine Learning Engineers and Application Specialists with the mission to transform and future proof Swedbank ability to prevent financial crime and cybersecurity, leveraging data analytics and applied AI.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Background as a management consultant, strategy advisor and business manager with deep technology understanding, holding leading positions and commercial responsibility with clients in Communication & High-Tech, Retail, Financial services and private equity; experience from market/customer/channel strategies, consumer insights and analytics with extensive CxO interaction and advisory roles in international settings.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


Most recently been driving the creation of modern data science and AI practice at one of the largest banks in the Nordic, fighting to introduce the data-driven decision-making mindset across a large and traditional financial institution with more than 200 years of history. In previous roles and other industries, I have always focused on concretising and capturing the value of data and how to leverage modern technology and disruptive innovations to transform traditional business models to generate new revenue streams and create customer value.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, DATA SCIENCE, DATA ENGINEERING

Irene González

Product Lead
SPOTIFY

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Background and current role

Irene is a Product Lead at Spotify in Stockholm, where she is responsible for the data collection platform, handling more than half a trillion events per day, impacting hundreds of Spotify engineers and data scientists and ultimately the user experience of hundreds of millions of users via more data-informed recommendations and an improved user experience!

Irene holds an Electrical Engineering Masters degree from the Technical University of Madrid, Spain, as well as a Masters of Science in Wireless Systems from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Sweden. She has worked for 13+ years in several technology companies, from well-established enterprises to fast-growing firms, where she has held various positions combining her technical expertise with group leadership.

Besides her professional achievements, Irene has held several positions on the board of the Professional Women’s Network in Stockholm, supporting gender-balanced leadership and helping other women to succeed in their careers through coaching and mentoring.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Stop saying ‘I’ and start saying ‘WE’. I love to be surrounded by smart people who have ambitious ideas and dare to challenge the status quo.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Irene has lived in Spain, Sweden, and Thailand and worked in many countries on almost all continents. That has given her the unique opportunity to get a wider overview of new cultures as well as a deeper knowledge of different ways of working. From the differences, in all areas, it is from where the best solutions come. It is key to learn from mistakes, fail fast and learn even faster.

Being able to work in companies handling big (really big!) data has given her a unique opportunity to spot and solve unique problems at a big scale in the data collection, data privacy or data quality areas. She is giving back to the industry by sharing her knowledge, challenges and solutions in various well-known conferences and forums.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, DATA ENGINEERING, INNOVATION

Henrik Göthberg

Founder CEO / Founder Council Chairman

DAIRDUX / AIRPLANE ALLIANCE

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Background and current role

Mission:
Empowering and guiding organisations in their pivot from a project, application and technology-centric view to business-led data/AI industrialisation.

Objective:
To accelerate and achieve 10X effect by:
1) Reaching perpetual data/AI innovation on next-generation cloud-based distributed data platform. (Data/AI ecosystems thinking relevant for emerging Energy-, Transport, Water, Public Sector, Patient and Health- 5G/IoT, Media and FinTech EcoSystems)
2) Applying First Principles thinking to Intersectional Innovation between legacy domains and the Data/AI domain.

Key focus:
- Crowdsourcing and Corporate Co-creation Alliances. Developing frameworks and an expert community for AI Ready Production in Lean-Agile Networked Enterprises. (AIRPLANE)
- Enterprise operating model on distributed data platform (data mesh/data product/ domain driven architecture)
- Information Architecture & Information Asset Management
- Digital platform Data Governance & Information Stewardship
- Continuous Production Grade Analytics
- Enterprise Self Service data discovery & visualisation

Favourite quotes

DAIR to reach new frontiers

“Organisations have too many AI-pilots. We must put them in an AIRPLANE to make the fly.”

“Commit to Deploy.”

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Lessons learned throughout my personal DAIR Journey. as conference chairman, working at Vattenfall, at Scania, and as Founder of a start-up and a Peer2Peer co-creation community.

Most initiatives and organisations are pushing for Data/AI innovation in production lack a focus on the organisational and change paradigm. How we orchestrate work. AI success is a multidisciplinary team play.

Tweaking the old innovation 10-20-70 rule:

AI in successful operation is
10% algorithm - The AI-model perspective with data science and ethics and all.
20% - The tech stack and relevant trusted compliant re-usable data.
70% is about People, organisation and orchestration of work. Operationalisation.

So far, most of the world is not getting it. What separates the Tech-Giants and the rest is the 70%. The Tech Giants industrialised approach to Data and AI. All tech is there. All algorithms are open source to keep us busy. Organisations, Nations and society's investments to close the AI divide must be more balanced to the 70% problem here and now.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS & BI

Olof Granberg

Director of Data & Advanced Analytics technology

ICA GRUPPEN

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

16+ years ago, I started out as a developer, architect and various other roles in a large consultancy and quickly found my calling in analytics. I had the opportunity to work with both small and large customers to help them modernise their analytics and processes around analytics until I 2010 joined ICA for the first time. Six years ago, I started working with Data lakes and Machine Learning technologies when I joined Telia. The open-source community driving these technologies have really opened my eyes to the mechanisms of collaboration and scalability and that really drives me today. At the ICA Group, I lead the technical side of delivering data and machine learning solutions to give our business the greatest possible value and make every day a little easier for our customers.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

My biggest passion is creating long-term business impact with data and insights and making data-driven culture an integral part of the business. I am also driven by finding the best way of achieving an ever-increasing speed and agility over time. And most importantly: “Build for change”.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Creating value is the start and finish of why we are here. This was really driven home to me when I worked close to the business as a developer and architect. Being responsible for leading how we reach analytics value has taught me that there are a number of foundation cornerstones that need to be in place in order to reach that value and that I need to make sure that it happens.
-Data-driven culture, so we actually use the data.
-Breaking silos and getting business, analysts and developers working together towards a common goal.
-Build for change, set support and frameworks in place so we can scale implementation while constantly increasing our speed and agility and being able to tackle changes.
-Making sure we have control over data and processes so we can start and finish use cases efficiently.





CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Christian Guttman

Vice President, Global Head of Artificial Intelligence and Data

TIETOEVR

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

Dr. Christian Guttman is the Global Head of Artificial Intelligence and Data and Vice President at TietoEVRY, the largest IT and Software company in the Nordics with 24000 employees and 10000 customers across all industries. His responsibility is to build strong business value across

Dr. Guttman is the executive and founding director of the Nordic Artificial Intelligence Institute (NAII). The NAII is one of the world's leading institutes in AI with a wide network of leading global AI experts and the NAII's goal is to contribute to societal and economic prosperity.

In addition, he is an adjunct professor and senior researcher at the world's most esteemed academic institutions, including the Karolinska Institute and University of New South Wales.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I have dedicated my entire career to artificial intelligence, focusing on the impact to research, business and society. The fascination with AI never ends for me. I see the development of AI as a primary means to understand our own humanity – that is, why and how we are intelligent, emotional and conscious. And as we are gaining deeper insights into our humanity, AI continues to have the most tremendous impact on business and society, with the potential to cure cancer, address climate change, and eradicate world hunger. How can one not be passionate about AI? I recharge my batteries in nature through surfing and meditation.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Dr. Christian Guttman, named one of the top 100 global AI leaders in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Data Science, has over 25+ years of practical experience and an extensive background in the field of Artificial Intelligence and Data.

He has a Ph.D. in Artificial Intelligence and degrees in Psychology and Computing Science. He built several successful AI companies, mostly in the health care, education and financial sector. 5 years ago he founded a non-profit organisation, the Nordic Artificial Intelligence Institute, which seeks to build a prosperous future for society and industry. He has created many high-impact AI systems and products, over 60 patents and scientific publications, and enjoys working in great teams and partnerships.

Many of his lessons and experience stem from his international exposure as he has worked across many continents and industries: AI touches closely the deepest values of each society and business ecosystem and hence AI products and services must adapt for cultural sensitivities. He shares many of his latest insights on AI on his LinkedIn and Twitter every day, so you should follow him on those channels.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI

Jens Gylling

Head of Data & Analytics

INFINITAS LEARNING

[in](#) Click to view profile

Background and current role

25 years of profound experience in leading positions within a wide range of industries. Strong business acumen through line organisations, consultancy, and the enterprise software industry, which has resulted in reliable delivery of business value through data, analytics, and digital insights.

Proficient in driving change management to establish and develop data-driven organisations to build a culture around data. Confident in building, developing, and leading cross-functional teams in a multicultural environment. Committed to agile methodologies and prestigeless leadership to inspire creativity among coworkers for business improvement.

Recruited, built up, and managed a spearhead department to ensure maximising business value from data. Push the advanced analytics agenda as well as enable data-driven analytics through new cloud-based architecture, of which a Data Lake is the first building block, to bring Folksam to the cloud.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Positive and results-oriented with high social skills where the importance of creating a social atmosphere to develop and motivate co-workers is an important part of my leadership. I see myself as a strategic, innovative and dedicated person who has a high drive and enjoys working with people.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

My university thesis, "Why use Data Mining?" brought my interest to the domain and became the basis of my professional career and my passion for data and analytics. Early on I came to understand the importance of delivering business value and having a strategy in place – something to communicate around to create a common view of the final goal, educating and creating an understanding of what value analytics can deliver for the business, and something to lean against when priorities change over time.

Due to the fact that the domain covers many disciplines of competence, I always strive to be humble and prestigeless in my leadership with a coaching and delegating approach, always with each coworker's individual needs in mind.

People with the right skills are key for the success in analytics as well as a good understanding of how to evolve the organisation right over time. Would you hire craftsmen without the right skills to make repairs to your house or car? Would you conduct surgery with the knowledge that the doctor does not have the right training and experience? Probably not.

Together with my great colleagues over the years, we have successfully developed and implemented multiple data-driven strategies with various roadmaps, operating models, organisational models with cross-country development and offshoring, and cloud-based architecture. Each challenge, and sometimes mistake, have given me great insights and understanding on how to improve the work ahead and avoid future pitfalls.

With the right people, competencies, and experience, anything can be achieved.




CATEGORY | APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Rickard
Hansen

VP Data Driven Services

ATLAS COPCO INDUSTRIAL TECHNIQUE

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Background and current role

After 20 years of product development on SaaS products, I joined Atlas Copco Industrial Technique in early 2018 as vice president for Data Driven Services. At Atlas Copco, I am responsible for developing new business opportunities based on data generated by our tools and equipment.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I have a passion for developing products and finding the value drivers that generate growth.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Ensure that everyone understands exactly what is the problem to be solved and support them in finding a solution. Engage people early in meeting customers and verify concepts. Care about the staffs' productivity.




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Katarina
Hansson

Data & Analytical Advisor

XH INNOVATION

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Background and current role

I don't have a background in technology but as business manager I have always been using data and insight for decisions. I worked 10+ years as part of evaluating and conceptualising e-commerce. I was responsible for customer and consumer insight and marketing activities. During the 24 months test period, we fine-tuned the offering and communication based on gained customer and consumer insights. The testbed was the Nordics and today, e-commerce is part of the normal business operation and customer experience.

I have been responsible for Ikea customer loyalty club, Ikea Family, and among others, I introduced an insight-driven customer segmentation. This was used to build relevant offering and communication aiming to drive higher conversion, traffic, and loyalty. As Marketing Manager at Ikea Denmark, I changed from decisions based on gut feeling to factful decisions. This resulted in market expansion, better brand perception and change of marketing mix. For the past eight years, I have advised customers in when and how to use data and analytics in their role as business managers: where to start, how to prioritise and how to secure successful implementation. The customers have all been large enterprise customers across the world.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

As the world is constantly changing, I do my best to stay curious so that I learn something new every day! My learnings I pass on to others in my role as a business consultant, advisor, lecturer, and mentor. To see how companies and people are thriving is my passion. My vision is that business managers embrace the use of data and analytics - and see this as part of normal business.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

There is no simple answer to becoming a successful leader as we are formed by our learnings, work experience and personality. Here is my advice:

Learnings: The best way in getting managers attention is to simplify something that is very complicated. With this in mind, I built a business outcome framework that resonates well with the business and its KPIs. Building blocks of data, analytical capabilities and use cases linked to sales, marketing, operation and customer experience. These building blocks also have a link to a business and IT assessment of the current state and wished position.

Work experience: Build a diverse team, solve problems as a team, learn from each other as sharing is caring and be transparent. Have a clear framework as this supports creativity. Secure that each team member understands the framework - the expectations and required deliveries, and allow the team to be creative within.




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS & BI, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Mark Hayton

Global Lead, Org Development Analytics

NOKIA

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Background and current role

My role as the Global Lead for Org Development Analytics involves helping leaders understand the experience of the average Nokia employee, and in part to help our employees understand what our leaders are prioritising. In addition, I organise a network of surveyors throughout the corporate functions educating on methods and practices and consolidating data on the back end to build an operative picture of our organisation that helps design programs for efficiency and effectiveness and interventions that help us course correct. In my career, I've worked in the UK, US & Finland mainly, with long term projects in Asia and the middle east. I've worked in a large global corporation, at an SME and a start-up and my background is microeconomics, behavioural psychology and back in those days, bartending, telesales, customer service hotlines and assembly lines.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

What I like to say to those I work with, is "People don't think as much as they think, they think". For leaders, this means, what they want is not always obvious. For employees this means that what they are doing is usually "the old way" rather than the best way. I'm passionate about helping people see a better way forward.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Mistakes and failure. The funny thing about forecasting the future or offering alternative ways of working is you are, by default, criticising the way things currently are. Most leaders helped build or maintain the way things are, so from the start, it's not going to be a popular endeavour. You need a thick skin to work in People Analytics. That said, for all the difficult presentations, explaining and missed forecasts, when you draw an "a-ha" moment from your LT, that lasts a lifetime. The other great lesson is, you can do good things alone, but you can only make a great impact with a network of competent professionals. Imagine reacting to Covid-19 with only core HR data or trying to draw the line between engaged employees and market success starting with only your employee list. That's not how it works. This is a team game, the more competencies you can bring to the table, the more connections you can make with data.




CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Fredrik Heintz

Associate Professor (Bitr. Professor)

LINKÖPING UNIVERSITY

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Background and current role

Dr. Fredrik Heintz is an Associate Professor of Computer Science at Linköping University, Sweden. He leads the Reasoning and Learning group within the Division of Artificial Intelligence and Integrated Systems (AIIIS) in the Department of Computer Science. His research focus is artificial intelligence, especially autonomous systems, stream reasoning and the intersection between knowledge representation and machine learning. He is the Director of the Graduate School for the Wallenberg AI, Autonomous Systems and Software Program (WASP), the coordinator of the TAILOR ICT-48 network of AI research excellence centres, the President of the Swedish AI Society, a member of the CLAIRE extended core team, a member of the EurAI board, a researcher at the AI Sustainability Center, and a member of the European Commission High-Level Expert Group on AI. He is also very active in education activities both at the university level and in promoting AI, computer science and computational thinking in primary, secondary and professional education. Fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA).

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

AI research with a passion for developing and spreading knowledge about AI. AI is important for everyone, as it is likely to have a profound impact on all aspects of our society.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I try to do the things that others don't. I have worked in many associations over the years, mostly in a non-profit organisation on a voluntary basis. The engagement of individuals with shared goals is a superpower!




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA SCIENCE

Maija Hovila

Chief Analytics Officer

KONE

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Background and current role

Maija is the Global Head of Analytics at KONE. She leads the KONE Analytics Center of Excellence and is actively driving analytics competence and maturity development across the organisation. KONE is a global leader in the elevator and escalator industry, offering new and innovative equipment, people flow and digital solutions. With over 60 000 employees in over 60 countries and net sales of EUR 10 billion (2020), KONE is one of the largest companies in the Nordics. KONE equipment moves over 1 billion people per day. Prior to KONE, Maija was a global analytics leader at Unilever in London, building the global analytics and digital insights capabilities to revolutionise the way data insights are now part of Unilever’s business globally. Maija holds an MSc in applied mathematics, strategy and international business, as well as an MBA from the University of Cambridge.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I have always been energetic and enjoyed challenges. Over the years, this has led me to, e.g. become the national champion in Ironman distance triathlon and to represent Finland and Great Britain internationally in four different sports, including the Ironman Triathlon World Championships, Cycling World Championships and Youth Olympics. I keep applying this same level of energy and passion to my professional roles. For a long time, I have had a keen interest in utilising data to better understand people’s behaviour and to improve business performance. I have also always been passionate about foreign cultures and I have tried to learn more by living in six countries over the years.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

- International experience from over 80 countries, currently holding citizenships of UK and Finland.
- Extensive global experience in the areas of data, analytics and strategy across consulting, start-ups and large multinationals in both B2C and B2B sectors.
- Work experience as a management consultant, analytics consultant, analytics competence and digital insights lead, analytics CoE leader, insights analyst, consumer insights researcher and as marketing executive.
- Multidisciplinary academic background, holding two Master’s degrees in both engineering and business administration.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Annette Hultåker

Senior Data Scientist

SCANIA

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Background and current role

Annette Hultåker is Senior Data Scientist and Concept Developer for Advanced Analytics at Scania IT. She has been with Scania since 2007, originally working with quality analytics of Scania rolling fleet. Gaining many valuable lessons on working with data. She is head of two popular educations; Citizen Data Scientist and Data driver program, aiming to elevate Scania within data science. Annette is currently also an affiliated researcher at Integrated Transport Research Lab (ITRL) at KTH on a grant from the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research. Her project concerns data sharing for improved mobility services. Her main objective is to identify ways to obtain high-quality data for AI/ML-based mobility services by increased data sharing between transportation actors.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Working with education means I set the foundation for people to grow in their role in the data science community. It is very rewarding to see how people step up to challenges, take on new responsibilities, master new skills, and passionately talk about things they would like to improve. I also deeply enjoy trying to understand how data is affected by the process from which it originates.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


- My first manager (at a position within the Church of Sweden) taught me several things; how to tailor a team after the skills that a mixed bunch of people bring with them, give people the mandate to perform and grow in their roles, and be there for them when they come asking for help and advice.
- Sometimes I meet very dedicated people in our education that have a strong idea. The ideas are not always clear to others. But determination can really accomplish great things. So give people time and support to try out their ideas.
- Scania has a strong corporate culture, including values such as respect for the individual and working with continuous improvements. This creates an environment of trust, long term sustainable working conditions and a sense of togetherness.



CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, INNOVATION

Björn Idrén

Chief Data Officer
FYNDIQ

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Background and current role

Björn Idrén is a startup & business intelligence veteran. He’s previously built up the Business Intelligence teams and functions at Ericsson and Swedish payments unicorn Klama, Spotify Business, and Voi.

Björn takes a hands-on approach to all parts of Business Intelligence and is an expert in bridging the gap between data and business and utilises data for growth and innovation within all functions of a company.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I’m a curious and business-oriented person. I enjoy seeing and making an impact with data and insights. Passionate about 80/20 pragmatism as well as fast prototyping.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Working with data at 4 successful startups has really made me understand the importance and impact of three major things when it comes to how to improve a company through data.

Speed of iteration, iteration is innovation. With no speed, innovation gets lost, and with no iteration, you die as a company/product.

Share data with everyone in the company. I’ve seen it so many times, the value of sharing data with everyone. Do it, and you will be surprised what kind of ideas, insights, and value you would get.


Utilise existing data. Usually, data teams work with incorporating new data points instead of harnessing existing data. There is not one company on the planet that fully utilises the value of their modelled, trusted data.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, AI

Ronnie Jansson

Head of Advanced Analytics & AI
VOLVO CARS

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Background and current role

As the head of the Advanced Analytics & AI organisation at Volvo Cars, I try to bring together smart and engaging people doing data science, product development and software engineering to make the hype around AI inch towards reality. Volvo Cars and the whole automotive industry is going through a massive transformation on multiple fronts, and I want to make sure data science and machine learning gets to play a leading role in that transformation.

My career prior to Volvo Cars was spent in New York: first as a PhD student and postdoctoral researcher in astrophysics, then a few years as a quantitative analyst on Wall Street before switching to data science in the digital media industry.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I’m trying to solve how to successfully apply and scale advanced analytics and AI in a large corporation. It’s a really fun challenge – and I am thoroughly enjoying spending my time at the intersection of people, business, and technology.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I have benefited a lot from working in different industries: academia, finance, media and automotive; different countries: the United States and Sweden; and having different roles: researcher, data scientist and team manager. Different people tend to be attracted to different fields, which leads to, e.g., the work culture in finance being quite different to the digital media business. Exposure to this diversity in thought and ways of working has given me many points of reference when making decisions.

My past as a research scientist in astrophysics has definitely shaped me, and in unexpected ways. Having become comfortable with the complexity and sometimes unsolvable problems in science has led me (often incorrectly) to downplay the difficulty of problems I face today. I tend to approach any problem (in business, management, or otherwise) with the attitude “how hard can it be?”. I realise this is overconfidence, but it has served me well – so far.



CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA SCIENCE

Peter Jönsson

Sr. Manager, Solutions Engineering

TABLEAU

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Background and current role

I am evangelising the benefits of a true self-service, easy-to-use, and speedy-to-deploy business analytics platform. I'm getting people excited about the prospect of finding unlimited insights from their data and helping them unearth answers to questions that no one ever thought they could ask. When I demo, people are transfixed by every single click, every single drag and drop as they envisage how data visualisations will transform their organisation. With almost 20 yrs experience in the BI/Analytics industry, I am now leading a team of solutions engineers across the Nordics.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am on a mission to help people see & understand data.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Organisations got more data than ever at their disposal. There is no shortage of data, but it's more difficult than ever to see and understand that data. It's virtually impossible for some organisations to leverage all this information to make informed, and data-driven decisions. It has always been my ambition to help these organisations to access this information, see it and understand it, and sharing it across the organisations. My career has been shaped by this desire and ambition, and the success I've enjoyed has benefited more customers along the way. I have now taken these achievements and experiences to the next level in managing a team of solution engineers to continue the quest of helping more people see and understand their data.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI

Minna Kärhä

Data Strategist

KAITO INSIGHT

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Background and current role

Having worked 15+ years in the Data & Intelligence domain, I have gained experience managing projects providing better information for decision making and creating business value with data. In recent years the shift from "IT-centric" thinking to "enterprise data culture" thinking has been remarkable. For me, data and analytics have always been more about the people and business value than technology, although the right set of technology and architecture is an important base to capture and process data. Currently, I work as Data and Analytics Lead at Finnair, leading the centralised team responsible for data science, data platform, data management, BI and analytics. As a central team, our main purpose is to work with our colleagues from other organisation units (customer experience, commercial, operations.) bringing to them the best tools to create value from data.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

My passion is making data value creation an integral part of business development. Data must be recognised and managed in the same manner as any business asset!

As important as it is to lead with data, critical is also to lead the data assets management. Design thinking and starting from business value recognition is the key to success. Building gradually, continuously measuring and validating.

Data culture is about establishing and nurturing a common language, activating peer networks and supporting the organisation's citizen data workers to collaborate.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Two main characteristics have helped me on my journey: 1) believing in my vision and persistently reaching towards it and 2) connecting with the best people, gathering a team to take the journey with me, as no one succeeds alone and it is all about the people. This is a continuous learning path and my main goal is to turn every challenge to opportunity and every failure into learning. And there is an opportunity to learn from others when you give them recognition and listen to them.

I have learned that doing it alone will not get you very far, and if you do not believe in your own vision and speak it, no one else will either. If your message is not understood the first time, instead of getting frustrated and blaming others, reflect their viewpoint and position, and reshape your message. Hearing and seeing others, and having open dialogues, brings us much further than trying to fit others into your own model of seeing and thinking.




CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Elena Kell

Senior Responsible AI & Data Specialist

H&M GROUP

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Background and current role

Since 2018 I have been working with helping organisations to work with AI in a responsible way. In my work, I drive initiatives to operationalise Responsible AI & Data in the organisation and am part of the strategic work of continuing to build the organisation for Responsible AI & Data. I am also leading the Women in AI Sweden chapter with a mission to inspire, educate and connect women in this field and is strongly committed to driving inclusion, diversity, and gender equality agenda in AI.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

My experience and passion are within Responsible AI, AI governance and risks, innovation, change management, diversity, equality and inclusion. My biggest passion is to create an inclusive, diverse and equitable conversation in AI and encourage the dialogue that stretches beyond technology.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Building a community, working towards what I believe in and connecting with other leaders who strive to create an equitable future for all has been a source of inspiration, learning and driving force. I have always strived for challenging myself and the status quo, often asking questions that no one else in the room would raise. The biggest lesson for me has been trusting my instincts and working for what I believe is important to create a fair and equitable AI and data-driven technology.




CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Errol Koolmeister

Founder

THE AI FRAMEWORK

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Background and current role

With 10+ years of experience from a wide variety of industries Errol have been able to reach an expert level in working with and extracting value from data. Both hands on in the data and from a strategic perspective by creating data products and leading large teams. He does so by leveraging, in the majority of the cases, open source technologies such as Spark, R, Python and Tensorflow with BI tools such as Shiny, Tableau and Qlik.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I am obsessed with creating a data-driven world. Where we optimize our efforts to create an inclusive & appealing place to be for everyone fuelled by AI & technology

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

The most important lesson I have learned so far is that you need to focus on the value rather than the complexity. It doesn't matter how good your insights are if you can't use them. Make sure you build a strong team that works with you towards a common vision and empower them to do what they do best. Stop focusing on the details of their work rather spend time on the expected outcome and coach them into the results you want to have. The only thing you can know for sure is that you don't know everything so get brilliant people to join you and you will become successful.





CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, INNOVATION

Göran Kördel

CIO

BOLIDEN

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Background and current role

Göran Kördel is the CIO of the Boliden Group, a mining and metals company. He has actively been driving cooperation between operational IT and traditional IT, a prerequisite in digitalisation. Connected machines (IoT), an advanced network, positioning solutions and data analytics are a key technology enabler for Boliden. Göran Kördel has for many years been driving strategic changes within IT, as CIO for Sandvik, as part of Ericsson IT Management and in his own consultancy (Nordwise Management). Göran Kördel earned his MSc in Industrial Management and Engineering at Linköping University. He is a highly experienced business professional with a proven track record of leading large IT organisations through complex change, from strategy, through implementation into sustainable business operations.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I believe in people. Anyone given the right prerequisites and that are motivated, takes responsibility and can do miracles.

I believe in technology. Technology has caused a lot of problems for mankind, but it has also created solutions for a better life. I am convinced that technology will help us stop climate change and solve other challenges.

I get energy from interacting with people, especially with start-ups and in other innovative environments.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

It takes at least two crises to become a leader. My first crisis was in 2001/2002. As a manager at Ericsson, I had to do heavy cost-cutting, large outsourcing and let people go. Ten years later at Sandvik, first a major downturn in the economy, then a major restructuring of the whole group, including IT. The current pandemic is today's big crisis for society. Fortunately, not a big crisis in the company I now work for. Switching to remote work has been smooth.

New technology and keeping up with the fast development of Technology could be a challenge. But I really do not see this as a problem. If you are curious, you will learn, but you always need to remember to listen to experts.

The real lessons learned for crisis is that it all comes down to people, your skills to communicate and build relationships. As a leader, you need to have a good dialogue with your co-workers, management and all your stakeholders.



CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, INNOVATION

Iiris Lahti

Founding Partner

AI ROOTS

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Background and current role

For the past 13+ years, I have been focusing on understanding and resolving how different companies find the most relevant data and refine and integrate it into their business processes and daily work. I started my career in consulting and after that, spent 6+ years in a media company, developing its data & analytics capabilities, utilisation competencies and data-driven culture. At the end of 2019, I joined the founding team of AI Roots. My role is to help data professionals, small businesses and entrepreneurs network and find new employment opportunities. Together with this network, we are helping companies to evolve their data-driven culture, scale up their data capabilities and gain sustainable business value from data and AI solutions.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am a data enthusiast who believes in the power of networking, collaboration, strength-based leadership and entrepreneurial growth mindset. I am especially excited to help companies innovate and adopt new ways of creating sustainable value for the business, its customers and employees with data & analytics. I want to help my customers to take good care of their data assets and use them in a responsible way. I am a constant seeker of good work-life balance and gain energy from sports and spending time with my family. I am currently training for a triathlon race next summer.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I started my career in the consulting business and it was a great way to experience different leadership styles and understand what good leadership means. The most defining experience was, however, working in the energetic and fast-paced media environment and leading a highly skilled team of analysts and data scientists. We had to adapt as a team to constantly changing organisation, market situation and technology landscape. As a leader I needed to understand my team member's individual strengths and development needs, find matching roles within the organisation and help them succeed through coaching and mentoring. At AI Roots, I have learned to utilise these skills and experiences when helping entrepreneurs succeed.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Garance Legrand

Data Scientist

VINNOVA

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Background and current role

I have been solving business problems with advanced analysis for over 10 years. I work hands-on with data science, coding & developing analyses and machine learning models. This hands-on work brings me a lot of satisfaction and a sense of achievement when a solution takes shape and is used by the people that need it, and keeps my feet on the ground (or my hands in the data as it would be more accurate to say). This groundedness is a strength when it comes to the second part of my work which is to advise the organisation to develop strategies and roadmaps to increase their analytical capabilities. Accompanying organisations from a state of being data-aware to a state of being data-driven has been more and more my focus in recent years. In that pursuit, I am an advocate of agile and lean methodologies, collaborative work between users and developers, and always an eye on the value.

Quote

Your insights will always only be as rich and as the data, you base them on. Whether insights are generated by a simple model or a more advanced AI solution is not as important as the data you base your solution on and the clarity of your purpose.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I have explored several worlds. Through my consulting years, I have worked at large Swedish companies. I have been on the start-up and social innovation scene supporting projects to improve the conditions for people new to Sweden. I have worked in developing countries where I have led data collection and monitoring and evaluation projects. Using my skills for the greater good has been a strong driver to develop my career. This ambition has brought me to Vinnova, the Swedish agency for innovation, where I get to unite my competencies and my ideals to work for a smarter, stronger and kinder society.




CATEGORY | AI, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Giovanni Leoni

Global Development Leader Advanced Analytics

IKEA

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Background and current role

Better business has been the focus during my professional background of +20 years across multiple sectors. Focus on customer experience, sustainable change management, clarity in impacting factors for better business and wrapping everything in numbers and decision-models working within diverse areas as sales and procurement of services, digital and physical products, supply chain, automatisisation and business analytics. In my current role as Global Development Leader Advanced Analytics at IKEA, I act as a driving force to develop new analytics capabilities to retrieve insights and deliver business value within the field of the IKEA range. I act as a data translator, collaborating with multiple diverse teams of highly competent subject matter experts, management and data experts.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am passionate about complexity and the beauty of synthesis when the diversity of people and ideas come together and create new breeds of thoughts and movement forward. Love of life, family, health, exercise, nature and of course, "un buon caffè".

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Across the domains of business and data, I have acted as a change agent in everything from designing completely novel advanced analytical models on a global scale, delivering multiple solutions supporting better decisions and acting as a change leader in creating high business impact. Furthermore, I have developed processes, governance, designed and delivered Centre of Excellences in multiple fields. I am strongly guided by values and have hence been engaged in the field of data ethics, hands-on working with frameworks and applying doing business for good with the use of data in a responsible way. Finally, I have been active in the field of driving the discussion of how humans are augmented by machines and how we can find a good path forward for the benefit of society.



CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Robert Luciani

Head of R&D
FOXRANE

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Background and current role

Robert is first and foremost a jazz-fusion composer but has a deep background in formal logic and computer science. He has worked as a BSD kernel developer, a technical specialist at Microsoft, and an entrepreneur. In his current role as head of R&D at Foxrane, he develops AI models that solve massive combinatorial optimisation problems in the aviation, maritime, and logistics industries.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm just an engineer that loves to dial things to 11 and see what happens. The best part is that when it comes to the world's most exciting work done at innovative companies, from game studios, to AI research labs, and the team studying black holes at the centre of galaxies - all their tools can all be run on home computers. It's absolutely astounding what an individual can do with just the machine they have in their home.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

There are many forms of leadership but my style was formed already as a young Boy Scout. If someone is willing to lead by example, people will be willing to follow. You can't reasonably ask people to work, learn, and know things without being willing to do it yourself first. That's not to say that leaders have to be the best at everything, but the willingness to serve really needs to shine through.



CATEGORY | APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Marie Lykke Lützhøft

Head of Commercial Management
TV 2 PLAY

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Background and current role

Currently, I work as head of commercial management in DK broadcaster TV 2, primarily focusing on the growth of the streaming service TV 2 PLAY.

I'm concerned with the results that can be created within data-informed marketing that gives the customer the best experience and the company the best result across owned and paid media investments and ARPU. I have been working with CRM and data for 15 years and I have experience with creating results and running projects with a focus on subscription and digital business development, primarily in the media industry. In these years, I have worked closely with my teams striving to deliver results through different machine learning methods /modelling.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm a passionate leader that strives to learn and inspire people around me. I have been working with marketing in the media industry for 15 years, and every day I am inspired by new ways to achieve results through the use of data.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Growth from data in Berlingske Media, Egmont, Bonnier Publications, TV 2 PLAY.






CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Cathrine Pihl Lyngstad

Head of Data Section

NAV (NORWEGIAN LABOUR AND WELFARE ADMINISTRATION)

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Background and current role

I hold an MSc in Industrial Economics. I have worked within the area of data & analytics for 15 years, both within the software industry, consultancy and now the public sector. I have always combined my interest in math, tech and business, and I have held roles as a data scientist/analytical expert, consultant and team/department manager. Since 2018 I have been heading NAV’s AI initiative, and since 2020 I have been heading the data section that also covers data engineering, data management and visual analytics. Besides my role at NAV, I am part of NORDE (Norwegian Digital Ethics Council).

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I am passionate about using tech, data and statistics to make organisations, individuals and society smarter and support more intelligent and fact-based decision making at all levels. However, I strongly believe that the use of tech, data and AI must be both legal and ethical. Through our efforts within responsible AI at NAV and as part of NORDE I see the value of cross-disciplinary collaboration with legal experts, philosophers, tech experts etc.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I have always followed my passion and sought opportunities where I can make use of my skills, have fun and continuously learn and improve. + inspire and coach others. It is difficult to say what shaped the journey, but it has definitely been shaped by managers who have believed in me and gave me responsibility early in my career.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT

Maaret Malinen

Data Governance Lead

ICA SWEDEN

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Background and current role

I have a Master of Science in business and economics from Uppsala University, where I graduated in 2005. Although my background is in finance, throughout my career, I have worked with data in one way or another. From the beginning my focus area was often on business process development and improvement of analytical capabilities. I remember often having thought about how to best address all the data quality issues that complicated business processes and polluted dashboards with errors. What puzzled me was that it never seemed to be anyone’s responsibility to do anything about those errors. I started to understand that data management was a neglected area, while from my perspective, it was obvious what a potential this discipline has in contributing value to the business.

I found my calling in data governance and became the first-ever Global Master Data Manager at Beckers Group in 2014. In this role, I was responsible for leading the establishment of a data governance function, as well as a harmonization initiative for master data on a global scale. This role has been a true challenge for me personally, but also for Beckers Group as a company. Together we have faced many challenges and had to put our heads together to find solutions far outside of our comfort zones. I have shared the Beckers Master Data story at a few conferences, Data 2020 Summit among them.

In 2020 I started a new chapter in my career as, again the first-ever, Data Governance Lead at ICA Sweden with a goal to establish and accelerate the implementation of an enterprise Data Governance function that supports ICAs vision of becoming a truly data-driven organization. This is an exciting role where I’m certain I will be needing all the experience I have gained over the years in order to manage this transition. ICA’s Data Governance journey has just begun, but as soon as there is more to tell, I will be sharing our story with the Nordic Data Management community with pleasure.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I am passionate about making companies recognize the need to actively govern their data assets, just as they do for other assets. I have had the honour and possibility of being in a position to successfully lead that kind of shift in mindset and provide an organization with tools for managing data in an efficient manner. My experience is that IT CAN BE DONE and I have the tools of HOW TO DO IT, and I am willing to share these with whoever is willing to listen.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

The past years as a data governance professional have taught me a lot, but here are a few significant learnings. First of all, it needs to be clearly understood that data is a business responsibility and not an IT task. A strong business leader as a sponsor is needed to really set the appropriate strategic weight on a data initiative. Awareness of data governance as a discipline is often very low which usually means that a long time needs to be spent on building awareness at scale. A sign of being on the right track is when the company assigns senior business representatives with the responsibility as data owners. That is when the real work can begin. Getting the data owners, who are often experienced business leaders, to understand what data governance is about and finding their role in it, witnessing their development and finally seeing the “bulb light up” when they realize that they have the ability to change the business with the help of data, has been the most rewarding part of my journey so far.

Many seem to believe that technology can solve everything, but my experience is that there is no tool that can fix issues that derive from a lack of understanding of fundamental data management processes and ad-hoc ways of working. Overall, I would say that implementing data governance is foremost a cultural challenge. From a personal point of view, also a challenge in patience. Building the right kind of mindset, establishing standardized roles, responsibilities and processes within a company takes a long time and that may be the most important lesson I have learned.



CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI, DATA
ENGINEERING

Omar Marzouk

Head of Machine Learning
SOUNDTRACK YOUR BRAND

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Background and current role

I worked with Machine Learning in various domains for 10 years. I believe in product-driven ML design, and that ML efforts must live in a space where product, dev and business intersect.

At Soundtrack, recommendations are core to the product and business. I founded and am currently leading a team of very talented ML experts and engineers. Together we built the company's first data lake, created an infrastructure for ML and built several recommendation applications for music within our product. I meet on a weekly basis with the CTO, VP of Product and VP of music to orchestrate our AI efforts.

In previous roles, I worked with and led efforts to develop the world's largest Knowledge Graph about companies and public figures from structured and unstructured data. I also spent 3 years working with the research and development of a patented breast cancer detection system that is affordable and not locked to specific hardware. The system helped hundreds of imaging laboratories in Egypt afford computer-aided diagnosis that improves screening speed/accuracy.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm a research scientist who loves to build and grow teams that can transform ideas into products.

The best part about working with ML is that you are always working with domain experts, learning a new field from the people who know it best.

I'm passionate about product-driven machine learning design, ML ethics, Sci-fi and Latin music.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

An indie artist almost quit making music due to financial issues. He then got invited to the late-night show because Jimmy Fallon heard his song in a store. Our recommendation engines affect real people's lives and well being.

Company culture outweighs technical knowledge. A dysfunctional team of stars is less effective than a team of synergetic hard-working people.

I learned from Sweden that a leader is most successful when their team celebrates mistakes as learnings.

We have a saying in Egypt, if you are poor, don't buy cheap quality stuff, you won't afford a replacement. This holds true for companies. One should compromise and iterate, but don't accept a solution that doesn't set you up for the future, *especially* if you are a startup. Pareto 20/80 is your best friend.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, AI

Pekka Mikkola

Director, Data Driven Services
CARGOTEC

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Background and current role

I have lots of expertise in developing organisations with technology capabilities. 2015 I started to sketch architecture for Cargotec IoT Cloud and analytics and ever since I have been working with public cloud, data and analytics for creating new data-driven offerings for our businesses. Today with my team we are creating value in electrification and robotisation, customer operation optimisation and predictive fleet maintenance lifetime services with AI/ML.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I feel energized to follow the latest developments and make them work for us for smarter and better cargo flow. I am privileged to be able to work with passionate and highly talented Data Scientists and AI Robotics architects.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I enjoy working with people and help them find value from data to improve their operations or boost sales. Data-driven offerings creation is truly a cross-organisational discipline and change journey full of 'aha' moments.




CATEGORY | APPLIED ANALYTICS, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Aidan Millar

Chief Data and Analytics Officer (CDAO)

DNB BANK

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Background and current role

Aidan has been very fortunate to work all over the world, experiencing different ways of working and thinking - including Hong Kong, Amsterdam, New York, Hawaii and most recently California. He is now employed by DNB (Norway's largest Bank) as their Chief Data and Analytics Officer, where he is applying his passion for data and analytics to deliver enhanced digital customer experiences.

Aidan's wife, Chi Chi and their two little boys Jack (12 years old) and Matt (11 years old), help to maintain balance in his life. In his spare time, Aidan enjoys family adventures, kite surfing and enjoys relaxing and socialising with friends.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Aidan Millar is passionate about the positive disruption of technology and advanced data analytics in the financial services industry. He has over 30 years of professional experience partnering with senior executives to implement large-scale IT change and data-related initiatives to drive competitive advantage; a 'Positive Disruptor' with the courage to make things happen!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

1. Listening to understand, not to respond. Listen to find common interests and shared problem statements.
2. Organize the right people in the right place to solve well-defined problem statements.
3. Change starts with culture - changing the way people think and act on an important topic.
4. Communicate, communicate, communicate - constantly reframe your conversations to be relevant to the listener.
5. Share your passion - 'fuel' the art of the possible.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Farnaz Motamediyan

Data Scientist

QUEENSAI AB

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Background and current role

I have started queensai AB, a year ago, to both educate more diverse people into data science and to freelance through my own company. Currently, I am a Data Scientist at Spotify working with voice recommendations and partnership. Prior to Spotify, I worked at iZettle/PayPal and Mentimeter in Stockholm as a data scientist. Having my masters degrees in Computer Science and software Product Innovation has enabled me to work with data with a strong human-centric perspective.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

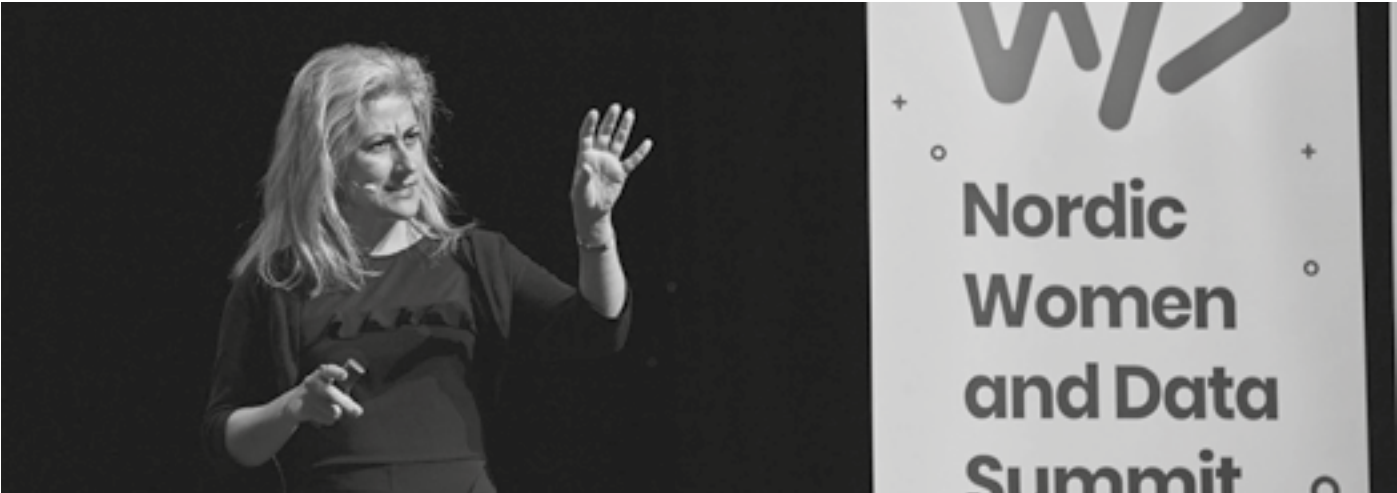
I have always been passionate about gender diversity in tech.

For more than 3 years I have served as a board member of PinkProgramming organisation to encourage more women into tech and data science. Starting my own business, queensai AB, also had deep roots and desires to educate a more diverse group of talented people into data science. When I'm not working as a data scientist, I'm travelling the world and learning as much as possible about other countries' cultures. This year I am learning bodyboarding and surfing in Cape Town as well as exploring South African wine farms to their finest.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I grew up in Iran and have lived in several countries and now I proudly call Sweden home.

From childhood and from all my experiences in life, I have developed a deep passion for equality and diversity. Being a Data Scientist, a board member and a founder of a tech startup has allowed me to pay my small contribution to our ever-stronger effort in making a diverse and equal tech industry in Sweden and in the world.






CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI

Mikko Muurinen

Head of Data & AI

HELEN

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Background and current role

I have been working with data, analytics and digitalisation for two decades, mostly leading teams of experts, but also doing hands-on work. I have been fortunate to see this area from various angles, as I have worked both in the public and private sector and also on both sides of the table, as a client and also as a vendor. In all roles, I have been functioning as a link between business and ICT. Currently, I work as the Head of Data & AI at Helen. Our four teams of analysts, data scientists, data engineers and data governance experts provide services to all our business units. My days are filled with helping, coordinating, evangelising and coaching so that our data community can get the most out of our data assets and analytics solutions.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I love everything related to Data! From sources to dashboards, processes and ownerships to technology, there are so many challenges to solve. What excites me the most is the ability to really affect the future with intelligent use of data!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I consider myself very lucky to have been able to work with so many wonderful people during my career. The most valuable lessons have not come directly from my area of expertise, but from various colleagues, customers, prospects or partners with a different viewpoint.

It doesn't matter whether you are sipping coffee with an old school salesperson at a roadside stop, whiteboarding new mockups with product innovators or discussing strategies with bigwigs behind mahogany desks. There's always a lot to learn from the people around you. I've tried to embrace the ideas that I've found inspiring, but stay true to my own values and beliefs. When you are open to exchange ideas and help people, also beyond your peer group, you will gain a lot!



CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Antti Myllymäki

Head of Artificial Intelligence

OP

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Background and current role

Antti currently works at OP Financial Group as Head of Artificial Intelligence. He leads the AI centre of excellence making advanced analytics and machine learning happen across OP Group businesses and tribes. Results include EUR 24M operational efficiency savings, 170 projects delivered, 750 000 unique monthly users and several ‘first in Northern Europe’ AI use cases. AI Center of excellence is responsible for both What (AI vision) and How (all AI development work) at OP Financial Group.

He has spent most of his professional career working with companies and industries that already are data-driven (financial service, high tech manufacturing, telecoms, media). Representative companies he has worked with include Nordic banks, TD-bank, CIBC bank, Suunto, Vaisala, Elisa, Telia and Wärtsilä. At these companies, he's been responsible for managing multimillion \$ programs with global scope. He also has international experience from Toronto from 2005-2007.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Antti believes that 1) we only have scratched the surface related to the impact of AI, 2) data must be made more widely available by opening up possibilities for opening B2B datasets across the EU, 3) sharing account/customer data across banks globally would enable huge opportunity to improve the amount of criminal money caught by banks and public authorities.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Working 11 years at Deloitte made me understand the characteristics of different industries, their geographical reach and specific roles. Involvement and leading a wide range of improvement initiatives covering strategy, opportunity assessment, business case, process re-engineering, service delivery model, technology design & implementation taught me global reach.

Last three years at OP I've learned how to make advanced analytics and machine learning happen at all corporate scale across all businesses and tribes.




CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Sofie Nabseth

Business Development

SANA LABS

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Background and current role

Sofie is part of the core team at the AI and learning company Sana Labs. Over the last years, Sofie has headed Sana Labs’ global marketing activities and expanded their international footprint. From brand and positioning to global AI summits, they have brought the benefits of AI in learning to individuals across the globe. Currently, Sofie does business development where she helps Fortune 500 companies adopt personalised and AI-powered learning. Outside her role at Sana Labs, she also leads education initiatives at the non-profit organisation Women In AI - helping more girls and women understand and apply AI. Sofie holds an M.Sc. Industrial Engineering and Management from The Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Beyond my passion for AI and learning, I would never spend a snow day without skiing. Having grown up in Australia, Malaysia, and Hong Kong, experiencing new cultures is a big passion of mine. In Stockholm, I'm always up for some vinyasa or TRIP spinning!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I believe I'm still learning every day, from colleagues, customers or situations I previously haven't encountered. From past experiences, some of the greatest lessons come from times of challenge - for instance being left to no one but yourself to make an ultimate decision, leading others - as well as being led by others. Like for many, the pandemic taught me about the importance of patience, rapid change and human connection. All of which I believe makes me a better person, and better leader at the end of the day. Like hard training is needed for a marathon, so is the experience of challenging situations needed to become a great leader.




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA SCIENCE

Annika Nordbo

Head of eCommerce Data and Analytics

SOK

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Background and current role

Over ten years of experience in the field of data and advanced analytics, PhD in Physics. Built/led teams in three large companies: architecture, data engineering, data science, BI development, business/web analytics, SEO, customer research. Currently ramping up a new team at SOK to enable the rapid growth of our eCommerce sites/apps.

Personal Motto

Do the right things rather than thing right

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Built a data and analytics team from scratch at VR Group. Hired smarter people than myself.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Niklas Norén

Chief Science Officer

UPPSALA MONITORING CENTRE, WHO COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL DRUG MONITORING

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Background and current role

Niklas studied Engineering Physics at the Chalmers University of Technology and then pursued a PhD in Mathematical Statistics at Stockholm University. For nearly twenty years, he has been devoted to the science and application of data-driven discovery in observational medical data. He has published more than 50 scientific papers on the topic, including internationally awarded research on duplicate detection and subgroup discovery. He currently leads a group of around 20 medical doctors, pharmacists and data scientists at the Uppsala Monitoring Centre, working on behalf of the World Health Organization to identify and describe unwanted side-effects of medicines. At the centre of their attention is the collection of more than 25 million reports of suspected harm from medicines, collected across the world.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I love to learn from data, and I especially enjoy exploratory analysis with its disciplined pursuit of that which we did not know to look for – there is a delicate balance between methodological sophistication, relevance and transparency.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

A few years into my career as a data scientist, we started to explore the use of electronic medical records to detect drug side effects. Initially, I could only see advantages compared to the case reports that I had worked with so far, but the grass was greener only from a distance: electronic medical records have certain strengths, but they don't reliably describe a patient's complete experience and often lack important information. It takes a while to get to know your data properly and I've learned to dig in and get my hands dirty as early as I can, to shorten that time. As a leader, an important current pursuit is the adoption and adaptation of agile principles and practices to scientific development and research; I see great opportunities for improvement associated with this.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Maria Nørgaard

Data Quality Advisor / President of DAMA Norway

DNB / DAMA NORWAY

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Background and current role

As a Data Quality Advisor in the largest financial institution in Norway, I work day to day with addressing data challenges. Coming from a technical engineering background, I see great value in combining technical understanding with business understanding.

My passion for data is also channelled into the work I do as President of Data Management Association (DAMA) Norway. My motivation is the immense impact that the use of data will continue to have upon society at large as well as for all of us as individuals. Therefore, I want to contribute to data being handled right and ethically. I believe that creating a community and spreading awareness and competency in data management will have an important impact. Data Ethics has been a special area of focus for DAMA Norway, in line with our ambition to have a positive impact on society.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Living and working in Oslo, Norway, my interests outside of work include taking advantage of the great local outdoor recreational opportunities. I share the enthusiasm for hiking with my dog, Lollipop.

Having studied and worked in France and Belgium, I appreciate international collaboration. Working within the network of DAMA International is a true pleasure in that it allows me to meet and collaborate with data management professionals from all over the world.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Starting DAMA Norway from scratch together with the other members of the founding board and bringing it into the vital, well-functioning organisation it is today is my greatest achievement. I still remember the first start towards forming DAMA Norway, one rainy day in Oslo in 2018, where the journey began as a coffee chat in a cosy little café near the Royal Palace gardens. Today, we hold regular events, internationally recognised certifications in data management and are well on the way to building a large and thriving community for Data Management in Norway.

We are by no means done and there are a lot of opportunities yet to explore to expand our community and the value we bring to it. However, I am extremely proud of where we are and the effort we have put into getting here. I can't wait to continue on all the events and content we have lined up. The future looks bright!




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA SCIENCE

Linn Jordet Nygaard

Senior Director of Data Science

UNACAST

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Background and current role

I graduated from Industrial Economics (MSc) in 2006 and spent 10+ years in consulting, working with clients in Finance, Retail and Media with extracting, managing and visualizing data. In 2017 I joined tech scale-up Unacast to dive into the world of location data and it has been a blast. Every day unlocking new insights from the well of potential in our unique dataset representing human movement around the world. I have had several management roles, but have recently decided to return to my original passions and do hands-on work developing our products.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I have been intrigued by logic, maths and problem solving for as long as I can remember. It is a dream come true to develop products that describe human behaviour all day long. When not knee-deep in data I also love working with people, designing teams that perform well together and coaching individuals to succeed at what they want to do.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Leaders who set ethical standards and people's well being above all else will always serve as inspiration for me. I constantly try to challenge myself and believe one is more likely to regret not taking an opportunity than doing something that seemed risky.

Working in a scale-up I have learned that even in our little corner of the world we can create products that have the quality and scale needed to succeed globally. One piece of evidence is the Social Distancing Scoreboard that Unacast designed, implemented and launched in less than a week last year. It hit a nerve both in the press and social media and reached millions of Americans.




CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Fredrik Olsson

Head of Data Science, Product Owner

GAVAGAI

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

I am a computational linguist by training, and I've been working in applied research as well as in start-ups with natural language processing, machine learning, and software engineering for the past two decades. My main professional interests lie at the intersection of (text) data, business requirements, and applied machine learning/AI. At RISE, my main tasks include leading research and innovation projects that help Swedish public agencies be better at working with their data, while on their way to employ machine learning to better serve Swedish society. In this context, I find myself repeatedly bring up the issue of Data Readiness.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

As artificial intelligence, machine learning, and natural language processing have the potential to make our society even better, I'm happy to have to opportunity to be part of the ride.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

* Working with data in the wild while at Recorded Future and Gavagai was an eye-opener for me; incredible amounts of text data are produced each day, but it is, contrary to popular belief, very hard to get access to. Trying to obtain access to data is a humbling experience.

* Working with numerous Swedish public agencies and companies in supporting their efforts to better serve their customers has made it clear to me that the road from knowing that there is data in an organisation to actually make use of said data is long and, at times, hard to follow. Data Readiness Levels is a good tool for verbalising the state of data, given a use case or business requirement.

* The realisation that my field, computational linguistics/NLP, is able to contribute real value for businesses and society and that people external to the field bring new requirements such as transparency, fairness, and explainability of models. External constraints such as unwanted biases of models and data, the need to explain model predictions, GDPR, licenses, copyright issues, are in many cases challenges with machine learning and data readiness that are not related to technical challenges, but still, there are efforts to solve issues by technical means instead of the procedural or organisational changes that are really needed.




CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Josefine Olsson

Europe Future Tech Lead

ACCENTURE

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Background and current role

Josefine Olsson works as Europe Future Tech Lead at the global consultancy firm Accenture, based in Stockholm. She is passionate about how exponential tech, innovation and diversity can fuel the shift towards sustainability, a mindset that she applies in her role as a strategic advisor to large Nordic companies, thought leader and public speaker.

She has been listed as Sweden's top 33 sustainability talents under 33 by Aktuell Hållbarhet (2018) and awarded as Accenture Sweden's 'Most inspiring leader' (2019) and as Accenture Strategy Nordic 'Innovator of the year' (2019).

Josefine is leading multiple innovation programs at Accenture, e.g. their Nordic partnership with SingularityU, 'HumAInity Innovation Challenge' that aims to identify groundbreaking solutions on how AI and new tech can address the societal challenge around mental wellbeing (driven by Accenture, SingularityU, Swedbank, Save the Children, Furhat Robotics and Samsung). She is also part of the five-year success story Global Change Award (a partnership between H&M Foundation, Accenture and KTH) accelerating a circular shift in the fashion industry, gathering 20.000+ innovations from 200+ countries over these five years and coaching the yearly five winners in an accelerator program in Stockholm, New York and Hong Kong. Josefine is the co-author of the trend reports: 'Future of Sustainable Fashion' (2017), 'Circular x Fashion Tech' (2018), 'Innovation ecosystem with a purpose' (2019) and 'Harnessing the power of the Consumer' (2020). In these different programs, Josefine has truly accelerated digital solutions to humanity's grand challenges with an ecosystem mindset and value-based leadership.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am extremely passionate about the intersection between exponential technologies, innovation and sustainability. When we apply exponential technologies with a diverse team in a responsible way and to solve the most important global challenges, we can unlock the magic.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I am a strong believer in the motto "Great minds don't think alike", and across all my experiences, a diverse team that works with technology solutions to truly important problems (environment, wellbeing, inclusion etc.) has truly been the common theme.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Maria Ovchinnikova

Product Owner

PORTCHAIN

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Background and current role

Maria Ovchinnikova studied physics at the Niels Bohr Institute while cooperating with Ørsted on her Master Thesis. This subsequently led to her first role at Ørsted as a Data analyst. She refined her role, working with data visualisations and later-on machine learning algorithms for premature fault analysis on turbine blades. After being offered a position at Novo Nordisk, she further developed her skill-set and passion for solving real-word problems while, at the same time, pursuing an MBA. This finally led to her current role, working as a Product Owner for Portchain and leading her own team of dedicated developers and data scientists.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I have always had an urge to challenge the status quo and that is also something that I take very personally, which is why I've pushed myself to be where I am today. ..But it's always a balance, between maintaining a good work-life balance and achieving something more, it's a matter of finding a passion that satisfies both your professional and your personal life.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Past experiences are quite important to keep in your mind, but maybe most important is your ability to keep (past) connections alive. The ability to stay connected to former co-workers, being connected to former industries and actively working to stay connected, is something that will help you in your career, but it is not necessarily something that comes natural. One of the key lessons is that being active in the environment leads to opportunities, and opportunities you grasp. Another lesson is that opportunities are not enough. Hard work and dedication is what gets you to your destination. For me, completing an MBA while working full time was something I saw as a need to pursue some of my opportunities while bootstrapping a full-scale hackathon (for women) was an opportunity that was given to me, but then required quite the dedication outside of normal work to then achieve.





CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, INNOVATION

Ingo Paas

CIO
GREEN CARGO
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Background and current role

Innovation and digital transformation characterise Ingo’s personal development throughout his career, inspired by and learning from great and outstanding leaders and innovators. Leading, inspiring, and realising digital transformation and cultural change is Ingo’s profession. He is a visionary, innovative, early thinker with technology savvy, goal-driven and business-oriented background. Ingo has been working in international companies with over 25 years of senior management positions across various industries such as Logistics, Retail/Wholesale, Sporting Goods, and Telecom. During the last years, Ingo has driven fundamental data-driven changes in agile development enabled in hybrid cloud environments with new innovative and integrated digital platform capabilities.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

The more complex, the more traditional and the more challenging the starting position is, the more I love to engage and strive for relentless tech and data-driven business transformation. I have a passion for making decisions into uncertainty, enjoy driving technology and data-driven change turning unsolvable problems into innovative opportunities. The more agile it gets, the more fun it makes!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

To not hide my mistakes and insufficient decisions, especially to work hard with the feedback that I disliked the most. Sometimes you still need to run projects, which is sad. But if you cannot avoid them, do as few as possible and do them as agile as you can. Many people say culture eats strategy for breakfast. I would rephrase this to data eats culture for breakfast.

Technology is not an enabler; it is a transformational capability because it’s exponential!



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, DATA ENGINEERING

Aija Palomäki

Enterprise Solution Architect, Information and Advanced Analytics
KONE
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Background and current role

I have started my career as a research scientist in the area of transaction processing on top of heterogeneous and autonomous systems. Thereafter, I have worked for a number of industries from telecommunications to banking, typically in the role of an enterprise or information architect. Over the years I have modernized a number of data warehouses and more recently, aimed for cloud-based ones as well as big data solutions and data lakes. Master data solutions, data reverse engineering, digitalization, business process re-engineering, and process mining have been on my plate as well. In my current role, I have been setting up a cloud-based data platform and also developed data modelling practices. Data and data platform are of little value unless we do understand the meaning and structure of data.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I have a passion for making things better. I love solving problems, improving work processes, people’s tools and their visibility to data that helps them in decision making. I think anything we as an IT community do, should be for increased business value and better insights. To me, collaboration is the key to success and I have enjoyed tremendously working with and learning from capable colleagues over the years.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I am inspired by clever, knowledgeable people. I always get the best results in collaborating and brainstorming with such outstanding individuals. I have been lucky to have met many such people over the years and I am grateful to each and every one of them. I have learned so much from them, not to even mention the many laughs and inside jokes, we have had together. Could not have achieved anything at all without my good colleagues.




CATEGORY | INNOVATION, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Petronella Posti

SVP Data Sweden

SOLITA

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Background and current role

My current role is SVP Data at Solita Sweden, a fast-growing tech company focused on creating impact by combining tech, data and human insight. I'm also on the board for Linti Group with Female Engineer Network, Ingenjörsojbb and Linti Insight. My latest board assignment is on Bizzcoo, a super interesting SaaS startup. With my 25+ years in consulting and tech, I have seen all sides of the industry and I just love working with people and data, combining these two is what makes me tick. I really enjoy working together with my team and I love helping people and organizations understand the value of data and of being data-driven – the possibilities are endless. For me, it is all about what data can do for people, the value we can create from it.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm passionate about leadership and I strongly believe in the power of collaboration, diversity and inclusion. I'm an advocate for gender equality and I'm committed to making room for more women within the tech world. I truly believe that the tech world needs to reflect the rest of the world – we need representation from all kinds of people, from different perspectives and points of view. We are building a brand-new world here, the digital transformation is real, and we can't let it be biased by lack of representation. Favourite quote: "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do and liking how you do it!" Maya Angelou

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I started my career at Diesel in the late nineties, when Diesel was this fast-paced innovator, challenging the fashion industry by always doing something different. It was an extremely creative environment where culture and values were the core of the business. Working there shaped me in many ways, it gave me a growth mindset, fearlessness and a feeling of everything is possible that is still very close to my heart and something I try to pass on in my role as a leader. Innovation is one of my core values, I think it is important to challenge routines and always think of alternative ways of doing things. You have to constantly challenge yourself in order to grow.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, INNOVATION

Christian Rasmussen

Head of Technology, Innovation Lab 2

GRUNDFOS

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Background and current role

I work in front end innovation in Grundfos Future Lab as head of technology in the Innovation Lab 2 team. This is a role that touches all kinds of technologies, from pump control over fluid mechanics to IoT and data management. Data is the backbone that will bring feasibility to scaling the business and my background in building and managing data analytics and data engineering teams come in handy here.

Data and algorithms have been a red thread in my work. In 1996 I coded my first neural network at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) and after graduation, I came to Grundfos to improve the energy efficiency of pumps through simulations and carefully measured and analysed test data.

I'm a member of the Danish Academy of Technical Sciences (ATV), where I'm heading the theme group for Future Production and contributing to baselining sustainable production in Denmark.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Purpose, team, impact.
I strive to make a better world and I'm a safe pair of hands in the team that gets the job done.
Leadership for me is to go new ways and prove the direction.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

The curiosity and eagerness to use technologies in new ways gave me the opportunity to join innovation initiatives and learn the basics of innovation management through a Corporate Entrepreneurial Leadership education and in practice.

The Strategic Technology and Innovation Management (STIM) consortium orchestrated by IfM in Cambridge was a perfect place for me to learn how efficient the co-creation of management practices can be. Something I missed when entering the data space.

Fortunately, I met people with the same passion by attending Hyperight conferences and we founded the AIRPLANE alliance to co-create Data and AI practices.




CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Josefin Rosén

AI & Analytics Regional Leader, Nordics

SAS INSTITUTE

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Background and current role

I have +15 years of experience in AI and Advanced Analytics and hold a Ph.D. in Chemometrics from the faculty of Pharmacy at Uppsala University. In my current role, I am leading a Nordic team of highly skilled and experienced AI experts providing, e.g. strategic guidance to organisations across the industry on how to unleash insight and value from data, and how to operationalise Responsible AI from data to decision.

I have authored numerous well-cited AI-related peer-reviewed research papers, as well as publications in popular media and I frequently speak at public events and in media about how AI offers an incredible competitive edge but how we also have a responsibility to ensure that it is ethical and sustainable.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I am curious by nature and a passionate learner. I believe AI is indeed a powerful force for good, and I have a very honest motivation to create awareness around not only THAT but rather WHY we need to pay attention also to the ethical aspects of AI and what responsible AI actually means in practice.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

SAS has been a global leader in AI and Analytics for more than 40 years and naturally has an incredible wealth of knowledgeable AI experts in-house. I have during my almost 10 years at SAS, learnt so much from exchanges, discussions, and cooperation with this network.

During both my academic career and my many years as an AI advisor, I have gained a lot of practice and experience communicating complex things in an understandable way.

Meeting organisations across industries daily has exposed me to a large diversity of data – unstructured and structured – everything from dolphin sounds to suspicious transactions, use cases as well as challenges.

All of this has given me a broad understanding and experience from the field, making it natural for me to lead and provide the strategic guidance needed in order to operationalise responsible AI, how it is a balance and cooperation between people, processes and technology.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, INNOVATION

Beatrice Sablone

Chief Data Officer

ARBETSFÖRMEDLINGEN

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Background and current role

I have been in leading roles in digital innovation and data-driven management for more than 10 years. I have received various awards and nominations for different roles and projects and am a sought-after keynote speaker. Working in a range of areas in the data and analytics field such as e-Commerce, Social Media, SEM/SEO, Marketing Tech, CRM, IoT, Smart City, Open Data, Web Analytics and information management and it all comes together in my current role as a CDO. At Arbetsförmedlingen, my role has been described as one of the most difficult ones. We are in a paradigm shift, technical, and in the way we are working. We are ramping up areas such as AI-powered profiling for job seekers, a new way of working within the organisation – from outdated legacy systems to brand new platforms with capabilities such as Master Data management and CRM.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Data is often described as “the new gold” and I think we underestimate the complexity by doing so. For sure, the value can be equal to gold, or oil, but it’s far more complex. And that is the attraction for me, that you must see the details and the bigger picture at the same time. And to make sense and order is hard to explain and sometimes disorganised!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


To always ask questions and ask more questions. In other words, always be curious. Never stop learning, keep the student in you alive. We leaders can never just think we know it all due to experience in this rapidly changing world. Be humble and take time to reflect, keep a tidy inbox and stand up working in order to be more effective!



CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Jukka-Pekka Salmenkaita

Director, AI & Machine learning
ELISA INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL SERVICES

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Background and current role

Dr Salmenkaita is Director of AI and Machine learning in Elisa International Digital Services. His team develops the AI/ML solutions that power Polystar products in telco automation, camLine solutions in semiconductor manufacturing, and new initiatives in pharmaceutical and other verticals. Before joining Elisa in 2015, Jukka-Pekka has founded two start-up companies and held a variety of product management and venturing roles during a decade in Nokia, including Head of Connected Home, Nokia Multimedia. He has a master's degree in Information Technology and a doctorate in Systems Analysis, both from Aalto (Helsinki University of Technology). His academic interests include analysis of innovation policy instruments, and he has more than 10 granted patents. On holidays, he enjoys underwater photography with his family.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Innovation in AI solutions is rarely enabled by the methodological development of machine learning only. It is equally, if not more so, important to simultaneously think about how the business process can renew and how ML and more traditional software solutions play together. When designing systems for operational use (like telco OSS or MES in manufacturing), one of the most intriguing aspects is the interaction between the human operator and the ML tools. We have just scratched the surface of those opportunities.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Innovations can be pursued both in small and large organisations. Creating an entrepreneurial culture and processes that support that in a large corporation can be an extremely powerful tool for renewal and growth. And it makes the working environment so much more rewarding for the empowered teams.

On methodological development, I love when we find that solutions originally created for one vertical segment can be adopted in other seemingly unrelated areas. That is not quite so surprising if you consider that there is only one mathematics, not one for each industry. Large-scale anomaly detection systems, for example, are one area with lots of cross-industry learning opportunities.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING

Alla Sapronova

Lead Data Scientist
STORMGEO

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Background and current role

ALLA SAPRONOVA, Ph.D., has experience in artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analysis, project management, and team-leading. She started to work with artificial intelligence as a Senior Researcher at the Bergen Center for Computational Science, Norway, in 2009. In 2014 Sapronova was appointed as a Head of Data Science for the Big Data Analysis Center in Bergen. She received two personal grants from the industry partners and got financial support from the Norwegian state for five RnD projects from 2014 to 2018.

In 2012-2016 she served as an External Sensor for the Department of Physics and Technology at the University of Bergen. Since 2019 Sapronova is the Lead Data Scientist for the StormGeo AS. She has over 50 scientific publications and presentations for the past ten years.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am developing models that explain input/output relationships. I am a physicist by education and a curious researcher by nature, and I am passionate about knowing how things are working. I value creativity combined with Occam's razor problem-solving principle.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I am always grateful to all my co-workers: as it is said, the leader sees more and farther, not because he or she has keener vision or greater height, but because of the talented co-workers who have lifted him/her up and borne aloft on their shoulders.

My team and I were recently able to standardise the data engineering routines to spend more time developing state-of-the-art data science models. By doing that, we successfully addressed rare events forecasting problems and applied the solution to insurance claims prediction and electrical grid safety monitoring.






CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Peter Sarlin

CEO & Co-Founder

SILO AI

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Background and current role

Peter is Co-founder and CEO of Silo AI, the largest private AI lab in the Nordics with over 150 employees, out of which 80+ AI experts hold a PhD degree. Silo AI is the next European flagship AI company that builds AI-driven solutions and products to enable autonomous vehicles, industry 4.0, and smart devices, networks and cities, operating from seven different offices in Helsinki, Turku, Oulu, Jyväskylä, Stockholm and Palo Alto.

Peter Sarlin is an expert in machine learning with a strong background in turning research into products. Peter holds a PhD in machine learning from Turku Center for Computer Science and has published 70+ papers. He is a Research Associate with the London School of Economics and Imperial College Longon, Professor of Practice at Hanken School of Economics and the Vice President at the IEEE Computational Finance and Economics Technical Committee. The Finnish newspaper Hufvudstadsbladet chose Peter to their list of 40 under 40 in 2018. Peter has worked as an advisor on machine learning for 10+ organizations, including the ECB and the IMF.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm passionate about building AI for people. That's why my company Silo AI democratizes AI and helps its customers become AI-first companies, transforming and creating new business using AI. I believe the most impact with AI is built by solving practical business problems, by applying machine learning and deep learning to the real world.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

- CEO and Co-founder of Silo AI, the largest private AI lab in the Nordics.
- Vice President at the IEEE Computational Finance and Economics Technical Committee.
- Finnish newspaper Hufvudstadsbladet chose Peter to their list of 40 under 40 in 2018.
- Professor of Practice specializing in machine learning and artificial intelligence at Hanken School of Economics (Helsinki, Finland).
- Research Professor and Research Associate with London School of Economics, Imperial College London, IWH Halle Institute for Economic Research and University of Cape Town, and Adjunct Professor at Åbo Akademi University.
- Peter completed his PhD in 2013 from Turku Center for Computer Science.
- Peter has built solutions as an external consultant with the European Central Bank, International Monetary Fund, Bank of Finland, Deutsche Bundesbank, De Nederlandsche Bank, Bank of Indonesia and Banco de la República of Colombia and others.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING, AI, APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Noah Schellenberg

Data Science Manager

DECISION SCIENCE CENTER OF EXPERTISE FOR TETRAPAK

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

Noah always had an itch to take data and apply it to a big challenge. In 2009, he noticed a time-to-event analytics problem where €billions were at risk with the warranty contracts in the wind industry, but no scientific basis for the financial provision decisions (the money to be set aside). Noah enabled the business to transform its business model to take more intelligent risks by making data-driven warranty prescriptions, driving market share. Now Noah leads applied AI to impact decision-making directly linked to KPIs at packaging giant Tetra Pak. He excels as a gatekeeper: No decision, no KPI, no AI project! Despite this, successful Projects do abound, such as applying AI to optimise issue resolution, manufacturing output, maintenance intervals, safety stock, and pricing.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Noah's daily work is to improve data literacy to help people make better decisions driven by facts. It's easy to get people excited about AI. Still, the real challenge is tying the data to insight AND action, ensuring that the efforts to deploy can be applied to an often-made decision challenge.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Hard work and passion bring results. One must lead with a "sense of urgency" to get things done and don't always assume that someone else sees it your way, as he learned Siemens Wind Power. He thought there was a whole statistics department, only to realise he was the only one. That was his calling. He desired to apply what he directly learned in the university to a real business problem. Concepts that came easy for Noah were complex and abstract for most others, so he knew to be a storyteller and distil information in easier-to-digest pieces. What leads to success is always believing in yourself, the cause, and the team. The most challenging days often lead to the most outstanding subsequent achievements. Applying AI is tricky; you will have difficult days.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Vinutha Magal Shreenath

Senior Data Scientist / Research Lead

AI SWEDEN / WOMEN IN AI SWEDEN

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Background and current role

I am a computer scientist by training and an equality advocate by passion. I have a PhD in Data Science from KTH, am an FDL 2019 fellow, and currently, Research Lead for Women in AI Sweden and the Senior Data Scientist at AI Sweden. At AI Sweden, I work across our strategic programs to develop technologies, programs and projects, connect industry, academia and government with the goal of advancing the adoption of AI in Sweden. I work in the Space, Mobility and Healthcare sectors. At WAI Sweden, I work on improving access to research opportunities to women, through events, panels, hackathons, active mentorship and leveraging our extensive network to bring more women into research. My research and technical interests are interdisciplinary, having worked on problems in Reinforcement Learning, Spatio-temporal analytics, NLP, Decision Science and Design Science across sectors. At the height of the pandemic, I helped found Aiditto, a non-profit company funded by Vinnova to help agencies communicate and collaborate.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Research is formalised curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. Data science's purpose is to reveal structures and systems, to allow curious minds and experts to find meaningful connections and address our deepest problems. I am passionate about elevating human cognition with AI, and AI can fulfil its purpose only as an inclusive and just space.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

In academia, I saw first-hand the enormous role having a good, mediocre or bad mentor can play on some of the brightest, most passionate people. It meant the difference between wanting to stay on in academia, and leaving it altogether, many times before completing the degree. More often than not, women bore the brunt of this injustice. It is a similar situation in the industry. Having networks and other structures that support women to do the things they are passionate about is crucial. As I did not have any support, I am driven to create it for others. Also coming from a very diverse country and background, I have seen that talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not. As a leader, I am driven to create opportunity, especially for sections of society who have tremendous skill, but have been overlooked.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, AI

Hanna Simons

Enterprise AI Strategist

DATAIKU

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Background and current role

Hanna started her career in Academia as a Futurist at Finland Future Research Center in the 90's. She was one of the early pioneers in China with environmental technology and sustainability as her research areas long before these became mainstream topics. She subsequently moved from academia to work with datacom and internet technologies and has 20 years of international experience working with emerging technologies in Asia, Latin America and Europe.

Today she works at Dataiku helping enterprises to democratise AI across their organisation, and bring agility and preparedness to the business through the use of data by everyone from analysts to data scientists.

Motto:
- AI should not be in a sandbox nor in a black box. Building transparency in enterprise AI end to end will become a key factor going forward.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

During the last years, my interest has moved more from pure data management and analytics to a more holistic ecosystem driven view of data and AI. Data, analytics and AI in many organisations today is still very much worked within silos or within the enterprise walls. Ecosystem data sharing and building value on it is still very new. Enterprise data is often not reused or shared and it is not connected - without the right context, data is not much worth.

After all, aren't we all here waiting for the love child of data and AI - knowledge?

This is as far as I can come close to a passion, if you ask. I believe the power of data is in the often hidden connections. That is why I believe knowledge graphs empowered by AI are becoming the next big thing to better understand the complexity and how things actually work together. Connecting the dots to see the bigger picture is something we don't have today. Especially when designing business for sustainability impact, this kind of radical transparency might become a key success factor to reach all the bold climate targets.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I believe - becoming "data or AI-driven" is not an end goal in itself. These are key enablers that will be built into the core of the operations - the same way the internet is a natural part of the DNA of every business today.

Democratising data and AI can help us to better understand how things work together and design for sustainability, circularity and excellent customer experience.

The next wave of competitive advantage will not be about how much data you can collect and sort out - but about your ability to use the connections to build knowledge of it.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT

Ruth Sara Sommar

Chief Information Architect

SANDVIK

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Background and current role

Ruth Sommar is an experienced Enterprise Designer and Architect with more than 30 years of experience as an enterprise architect, engineer, manager, leader, researcher and business developer in Sweden and international businesses. Her experiences derived from several sectors such as Manufacturing, Insurance, Finance, Telecom and Governmental organizations. Ruth is used to people management, strategic planning and operations management with a PhD degree in Enterprise Integration. For the last 18 years, her focus has been on data and information management and governance. Ruth has helped many companies to improve their architectural areas: business processes, information, capabilities, rules, etc. by a holistic view allowing to integrate them. Nowadays, Ruth is responsible for Information Architecture and Governance at Sandvik Mining and Rock Solutions. Her work is focused on an end-to-end perspective to treat information as a shared asset to become more data-driven towards customers and operational efficiency. She focuses on master data and governance around information as the ground for ensuring the quality of data smoothing system development, integration and BI & Analytics.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Ruth is a dynamic person who searches and strives for balance and harmony in life by developing several aspects. She enjoys travelling, meeting different people from all backgrounds, understanding the nature of human beings and society, sharing knowledge, contributing to interesting discussions, questioning the whys of situations and finding creative solutions. She loves music and dancing while finding silence as the balsam for the soul. Her foundations are freedom and love.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

- Implementation of a machine learning data catalogue as a part of data governance establishment in a large Swedish company which resulted in shorten lead times for the harmonization, alignment and interpretation of data from multiple systems used for compliance of Solvency II reporting.
- Harmonization and design of processes and related information for administrating Soft-Products enabling a large Swedish manufacturing company to add telecom services while maintaining their core business which resulted in improved process management and costs savings.
- Improvement of processes in a very dynamic environment within the aerospace industry with the objective to coordinate, control and create traceability of the involved activities/tasks which resulted in shorter lead times and costs savings along with software development/test for the Swedish fighter JAS39-Gripen.
- Total Quality Management expert for the achievement of the ISO 9001 for a 180 employees' industry within the metal sector which resulted in the first Spanish company to get this certificate.




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Dan Sommer

Senior Director, Global Market Intelligence Lead

QLIK

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Background and current role

Dan is a Senior Director and global lead for Qlik's Market Intelligence Program, responsible for the supply, demand, macro and micro picture. He also focuses on executive and strategic content, like data literacy, data-driven culture and trends in the industry. With two decades of experience in the IT industry, Dan is a frequent keynote speaker, blogger, and columnist. Dan has previously held the positions of Research Director, Agenda Manager and Global Lead for BI and Analytics Markets at IT research and advisory company Gartner. During the ten years he spent as an analyst at Gartner, he specialised in markets, trends, competitive landscape evaluations and go-to-market strategies.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

My passion lies in trying to understand, analyze and synthesize the big structures and tipping points in the data and analytics space, and how that relates to the market and competitive landscape. If you understand that, you understand how things are moving now and may get a glimpse into the future.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


- Find an environment where you learn from very bright and seasoned people. Surround yourself with as many smart people as possible. Some of it will rub off, this is more important than a title or salary.
- Find a place where you are constantly challenged. You have more within you than you think.
- Don't forget about downtime. It may sound crazy, but your best ideas often come to you when you rest or do something else.



CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT

Mats Stellwall

Senior Sales Engineer
SNOWFLAKE

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Background and current role

Starting out as a developer in the early 90s and soon found myself building more and more analytics specific solutions. When I realised I had built a full dashboard solution for a customer with code, I decided to start focusing on Business Intelligence and Data Warehouse solutions.

The next 10 years, I spent implementing BI and DW solutions at the organisation in various industries like retail and finance, having different roles such as project manager, architect and developer.

In 2010 I got the opportunity to start working with the IBM SPSS solutions and the world of Data Science opened up, something that has a big part of my roles ever since that.

Today I work at Snowflake as a Sales Engineer and the EMEA lead for Data Science, helping the organisation to get value out of their data.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

How hard can it be?

That is something that has always been a driver for me. If it is about learning about object detection models or how to judge synchronised swimming, I have never been afraid to dive into the unknown.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

My greatest learnings have always come from less successful experiences, I have made a lot of mistakes during my career that has given me many valuable lessons, some taking longer to understand than others.

One of my bigger learnings came from a big data warehouse project where we were focusing too much on the super users, that was not experienced with DW, so we did not deliver anything that could satisfy the majority of the users and by that, causing the project to be delayed with unsatisfied deliveries. So focus on low hanging fruits and always deliver something that can be tested quickly.


Also, being in this business for so long has taught me to never take anything for granted. What is impossible today might be possible tomorrow and it might happen faster than you can imagine.



CATEGORY | AI, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Agnes Stenbom

Responsible AI Specialist / Industrial PhD Candidate
SCHIBSTED MEDIA GROUP

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Background and current role

Agnes Stenbom leads the work within Responsible AI at the Nordic media group Schibsted. In addition, Ms Stenbom is an industrial doctoral candidate at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm where she conducts research on AI as a transformative force in journalism. Stenbom is the co-founder of a major industry network for AI journalism in the Nordics and serves as an advisory board member to the Wallenberg Research Arena (WARA) for Media AI. Prior to joining Schibsted and KTH, Agnes worked with research and expansion at digital media startups in Stockholm and New York. In 2019, Stenbom was elected as a Global Shaper through the World Economic Forum, joining a network of people under the age of 30 working together to address local, regional and global challenges.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I seek to leverage my position at the intersection of theory and practice to contribute to the constructive development and application of AI technologies in the media field. 'Responsible AI' isn't just a pretty tagline, but a prerequisite for building useful and trustworthy digital services!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Collaboration with smart, compassionate people from diverse fields of practice and study!






CATEGORY | AI, INNOVATION

Annica Wallenbro Stojceviski

Business Group Lead - Cloud & AI
MICROSOFT

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Background and current role

I have gathered +20 years of experience in business strategy and business development, always with a focus on how business needs can be met with the possibilities of tech. For the last 4 years, I have been leading the Cloud and AI business at Microsoft Sweden, making sure Swedish organisations are enabled to leverage cloud solutions in the best possible way for sustainable digitalisation. Innovation Velocity and how AI is empowering organisations and enabling new solutions never thought possible is top of mind to support me and my team.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

As a mother of three, I have a passion for how tech can make everyday life easier and empowering everyone to contribute with their best self. As well as how tech can help solve the great challenges of our time. I’m a true believer that the power within AI is helping us to accomplish this.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


You can come a long way with a true curiosity for people, an open mindset for new tech and have a pragmatic approach to constant change. Everything and everyone can and should keep improving for the better. Be passionate and find a way to incorporate your passion into your daily work. Find leaders and colleagues that inspire you, learn from them, and pay it forward. Keep being a role model for humankind in a more and more tech intense world.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, MACHINE LEARNING, AI, DATA ENGINEERING

Carl Svärd

Head of Category & Data
PRICERUNNER

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Background and current role

Currently leading the Category & Data function at PriceRunner and on a mission to create the world’s best shopping comparison service. My current role entails operational responsibility of the creation and maintenance of all structured (product) data, as well as our AI and machine learning team and initiatives. Have a strong technical background with multiple years of hands-on machine learning and data science experience from the media and automotive industry. Several years of experience in leading and managing data science and machine learning teams with tangible business impact.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

Analytical, driven, ambitious, and goal-oriented engineering leader and data scientist. Multilateral technical problem solver with strong business acumen and a passion for people, machine learning and data science. Possess the ability and desire to see the overall picture without losing focus on details.





CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND REGULATION

Sara Thiringer

Data Scientist

ICA SVERIGE / PINK PROGRAMMING

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Background and current role

I'm a Data Scientist with an interdisciplinary background in Political Science, Informatics and Statistics. I work at ICA Sverige, where we investigate and develop data-driven approaches and machine learning models for a broad range of retail industry challenges. I'm especially interested in model explainability, long-term societal consequences of data collection and predictive modelling, as well as fairness, diversity and inclusion in both AI models and the tech industry at large. In my spare time, I'm a camp organiser and code mentor at Pink Programming, an association dedicated to inspiring more women and trans people to start coding.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

As Social Scientists, it's often in our DNA to be scared of computers and believe that we are terrible at math. Not only is that not true - it's also in our DNA to be critical, ask questions and look at the long-term perspective, and that's currently really needed in the field of Data Science and Machine Learning.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Originally a Political Scientist and Swedish civil society leader, my path into data science wasn't obvious. After extensive use of Excel for organisational planning and follow-up, I was curious about what could be accomplished with more in-depth technical skills. This led me to pursue a B. Sc. in Informatics, learn the basics of Machine Learning on my own and study a lot of Statistics to truly be able to understand both the societal impact of data and algorithms as well as their hands-on applications and deployment. Entering the field of Data Science from a Social Science background has been both extremely challenging and very rewarding. My main lesson has been that it's truly possible to learn anything - with enough patience, dedicated hours and energy, all you need is your curiosity.




CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING

Carl Thomé

Machine Learning Engineer

EPIDEMIC SOUND

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Background and current role

I've studied theoretical computer science with a specialisation in machine learning and music informatics at KTH Royal Institute of Technology. I work as a software engineer focusing on understanding and developing best practices for deep learning DevOps in real-world production environments.

As my primary interest in life is music, I'm a music information retrieval (MIR) and sound and music computing (SMC) enthusiast. At Epidemic Sound, I'm supporting the company's first generation of machine learning-driven product features, including user interaction based collaborative filtering models for personalisation, but also new music discovery features based on the latest deep learning techniques.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

As a musician at heart and programmer by trade, my passion is enabling new forms of artistic expression by applying machine learning to music data.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

I have a hard time with the word leader as I'm finding again and again that to successfully develop a predictive model that's happily relied on by users, we have to view its development as an immensely broad team sport that involves people from vastly different technical and societal backgrounds. In order to get things right, it's important to involve dedicated software engineers, designers, data scientists and perhaps most importantly: data-literate business leaders.

As I like to think of myself as a hybrid between a rigorous software engineer and a business-value minded data scientist, I've found that these two mindsets exhibit a natural tension within myself, where the former wants to get things right, and the latter wants to get things out. I've found that I can alleviate some of that natural tension in a company by acting as the bridge between data scientists and software developers. By knowing a little bit of both perspectives and their respective risk prioritisation during a project's life cycle, I hope to be a helpful rubber duck.

My most recent insight is that it's very powerful if people meet in the middle by broadening their skill set in the opposite direction from their current expertise. Data scientists should practice software engineering best practices, and software developers should practice numerical computing and statistical uncertainty to understand that natural tension and each other better.




CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Daniel Tidström

Partner & Consultant

DATA EDGE

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Background and current role

Daniel is working as a partner and consultant at Data Edge, a management consulting firm focusing on helping clients create value by successfully combining data, analytics and data-driven decision making.

Before joining Data Edge, he has had a 20+ years career with leadership experience from both business roles and data analytics. He has spent the last years scaling and leading data science teams at leading tech companies such as Kambi, Nordnet and epidemic Sound.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am an extremely curious individual driven by a passion for fact-based decision making and using data to create value for both end-users and businesses.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

During my career, I have had the chance to work in a wide range of roles in both traditional industry and native tech companies which has provided me with challenging tasks, plenty of learning opportunities and the privilege of working with really talented people.

This has given me a fairly holistic view of the data analytics space and I have learnt a lot of things that work well, but also quite a few things that don't. In summary, I believe in trying to make the most out of the opportunities you get by being curious, keeping an open mind and being low on prestige. We are always learning.




CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Dacil Ullman Hernandez

Director Data Gothenburg

SOLITA

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

My current title is Director Data at Solita, a fast-paced, fast-growing tech company on a mission to create impact by combining tech, data and human insight. I am based in Gothenburg and responsible for driving Solita's business's growth within Data in the West region. I also advise our customers on strategic and architecture-related data issues, helping them in their digital transformation journeys. I recently switched sides to the consultancy world after many years in credit management services, most recently as Head of Business Analytics for the Nordics Business Unit of Lowell, one of the largest credit management services companies in Europe. For 20+ years, I have worked with analyzing data and transforming it into insights, creating real value for customers, companies and organizations.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am passionate about mentoring young professionals in their data and analytics careers. I believe my greatest accomplishments are all the promotions and career advancements of data scientists and analysts that worked in my teams. I love being able to promote others and seeing them succeed. My superpower is getting a diverse group of people to create magic together. Sometimes it can be challenging getting these techie individualists to work together, but communication is key. I believe in a direct way of communicating, no one has to second guess what I think as a leader. That creates an environment of psychological safety. A team of people with different skills and backgrounds can together achieve greatness. Be inclusive and ensure that your team can deliver value, not just you.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Let me share some words of wisdom, especially to women that have just started their career in leadership within a male-dominated industry. Don't be afraid to fail! There is a known expression, "Fail Fast", and after failing a lot myself, I realised that the worst thing that can happen when you fail is that you learn something from it. So, I chose to change the narrative and instead say "Learn Fast". Don't be afraid to fail because failure brings knowledge and innovation. Nobody is 100 % ready for everything, and learning is part of growing. At Solita we are not afraid of failure - we know that it is part of being truly innovative - we are more afraid of not learning and growing. And also, most importantly, don't forget to have fun! Life is too short not to have fun in all aspects of your life.






CATEGORY | APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Robert Valton

Head of Advanced Analytics & AI
VOLVO GROUP CONNECTED SOLUTIONS

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Background and current role

I'm heading the Center of Excellence (CoE) Advanced Analytics & AI at Volvo Group Connected Solutions, a global organisation that leads the development of Volvo Group's connected services and solutions. Our mission is to unleash the value of data from +1M connected customer assets to enable new and enhanced services, business disruption and internal efficiency.

I'm active as a speaker, board member, panel/jury member, both nationally and internationally.

With a background in sales and service innovation, I combine customer/business needs and technology with a data-driven approach together with a skilled team to bring value from data.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I like to inspire and boost engagement in advanced analytics and data-driven service innovation for sustainable transports solutions. I am an experienced leader within Advanced Analytics/AI and innovation with the ability to understand and combine customer needs with new technology into a strategic value that is operationally feasible and actionable. I am dedicated to nurture creativity and passion, drive change and digitalization with a focus on customer experience value. I like to think that humour not only makes me a better leader but supports an innovative mindset and way of working for myself and the team. To work with data, applied analytics and innovation is fun!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

In the past 10+ years, I had the privilege to work with some extraordinary people and lead highly skilled cross-functional teams in transformation. I embrace diversity and continuously work to inspire and support the team to grow while building an environment of diversity, openness, and trust. With a balance between reactive and proactive approach, I always make sure to invest in exploration and innovation to unleash the full potential of the team. I'm striving to be a role model in network collaboration, for example sharing experience and use cases, competence, code etc., with the focus on creating value together.


I'm proud of the value delivered together with the team, from "data to insights" and "idea to innovation" in multiple cases, for example, the first big data service at Volvo Group "Single View of a vehicle", RCA of complex quality issue, data-driven health prediction of components, data-driven support for electrification and transport optimisation based on asset utilisation.



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Valeri Voev

Principal Data Engineer
LEGO GROUP

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Background and current role

I hold a PhD in Econometrics and, during my academic career, specialised in the field of forecasting of financial assets' volatility and correlations using high-frequency data from various financial markets. In my current role, I work in two quite distinct areas: one is the digital shopper engagement, where I work on the recommender system for the online shop at LEGO.com and the other is the development and deployment of ML solutions based on IoT data to drive the optimisation and automatisisation of our manufacturing, operations and supply chain processes.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Aspire to understand the latest bleeding-edge technology but don't underestimate the fundamentals. I am passionate about both educating myself as well as anyone else who is interested in the field of ML and AI. I believe in open knowledge and contribute to both open-source projects and MOOCs. I am an opponent of the AI hype.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Working in academia taught me to be thorough and patient - having your work peer-reviewed (and reviewing the work of others) is a humbling and enriching experience. I realised early in my career that there is always someone who knows more about a certain subject, and I was motivated to learn from these pioneers.

I am grateful that I have had the chance and opportunity to dive deep into the fundamental sciences behind ML and AI - namely mathematics and statistics and I am trying to advocate for a more holistic approach to data science that is not only focused on the latest fancy trend out there.

In the past 10 years of my professional life, I have realised that it is often the simple but robust and transparent solutions that drive more business value. In most companies enabling an organisation to work more efficiently with data and streamlining fundamental business processes is typically worth much more than a project based on the latest technology.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI

Tobias Wagenknecht

Head of Data & Analytics

AFTONBLADET

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Background and current role

Born in Germany, raised in Spain, migrated to Sweden in 2011 - I consider myself a European data nerd who loves the beauty of numbers and charts as much as the satisfaction of being able to come up with an actionable decision instead of just another report. I spent half of my life within travel & hospitality and have learned a lot about the eternal struggle of making a conservative industry more data-driven. A story about many failures, learnings and iterations. In 2019 I finally joined Aftonbladet, the biggest newspaper in Sweden, where I help with the digitalisation and the analytics of a field that - compared to traditional newspapers - is still very young.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I breathe data and I love modern cloud-based tools with all their possibilities, but you might often catch me firing up good old Excel because sometimes the beauty is within simplicity - and Excel is so vastly available, which makes both data and conclusions easy to reach a wider audience.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

"I don't work with data, I work with people!" - This is what I usually say when someone asks me about my biggest challenges. Handling data is relatively easy, getting people to change their way of working proves again and again to be one of the toughest things in everybody's journey to becoming data-driven. I learned the hard way that the choice of tools is almost irrelevant. What counts is the full commitment by everybody (especially the leadership) to be daring to challenge the old habits and to allow progress to happen along with the occasional failures.




CATEGORY | DATA MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, DATA SCIENCE, APPLIED ANALYTICS

Nina Walberg

Head of Data & Insight

ODA

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

Nina Walberg has built up and is leading the Data & Insight discipline in Oda (formerly known as Kolonial.no). Previous experience includes building up Data Analytics in VG and then establishing Insight across the Media houses in Schibsted as part of Schibsted Product & Tech. She spent seven years in BearingPoint as a management and technology consultant leading both Business Analytics and Financial Services in Norway. Nina has a Master of Technology from NTNU in Industrial Economics and Technology Management.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I really believe in the power of data, and I am also very passionate about people and truly care about those I work with. This makes my current role in a scale-up with extremely good conditions to do amazing things with the best of our minds and our high-quality data my dream role!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


When I started off as a consultant in 2008, I came into a culture with a high degree of trust and belief in everybody independent of seniority. The partners would even ask if they could help out in stressful projects. A partner said that he didn't care if I worked on the beach as long as I delivered as promised. This was way before we talked about remote work. I felt a strong degree of trust from the start and dared to take on large challenges and grew a lot on them. And it was okay to fail. This start of my career has shaped my approach to building teams. I make sure to hire smart people that are driven by making a difference based on sound values. Then I make sure to create the right conditions around them and trust them in the same way I experienced as a junior consultant.



CATEGORY | BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND BI, INNOVATION

Henrik Wickström

Project Manager
MINDFLOWER

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Background and current role

10+ experience in the energy business where I have been involved in the digital transformation of the business segment.

I have worked with research projects in the fields of AI and IoT, cutting edge projects in the City Control room, business intelligence and information architecture.

I left the energy business in march 2021 to try out the consultancy business where I will lead developers in application development and VR/AR & 3D.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am good at seeing the big picture and identifying areas that can be improved. When colleagues described me with one word like happy, inspiring, curious and committed were some of the words that came up.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader


I strongly believe that almost everything can be done better, smarter and more efficient. Change is constant and something you have to embrace if you are going to survive in modern society.



CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, DATA ENGINEERING

Rockie Yang

Co-Founder
KNOCK DATA

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Background and current role

Rockie Yang started his career in hardware design, logic board design, DSP processing, FPGA controlling. He left a great legacy on full function CPU board design with embedded system architecture, which is still widely used a decade later.

He switched his focus on the software industry soon after. With over 10 years of software industries, he has worked on multiple products in various life cycles. Experience in designing a system from scratch to maintain a large system in every perspective in the software design lifecycle.

He dedicates himself to generating value smoothly from big data for clients by applying the most suitable technology with a deep understanding of the business requirement.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

Rockie Yang is a data enthusiast. He is passionate to build a flexible and yet simple end to end big data pipeline which can flawlessly transform business requirements to realisation.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Listening to customers need deep in the iceberg both organizationally and technically.
Sort out in the complex technical landscape with a pragmatic approach.
Realise a smooth experience on the way by flexible adapt to various situation.




CATEGORY | APPLIED ANALYTICS, INNOVATION

Marko Yli-Pietilä

Head of Smart Operations

STORA ENSO

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

I have been working with digitisation and data subjects all my career. I started by selling 3D CAD at the end of the 2D design era. The next step was in Nokia HR and leading the piloting of Computer Based Training. I wrote my post-graduate thesis of the same. After some years in telecoms R&D and product management, I was back in using data to uncover the value of different telecom solutions and services for customers. That led to some serious data warehousing consulting and sales at Teradata before moving to develop consulting business and eventually leading a major industrial digitization program at my current employer Stora Enso.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I am passionate about developing business and operations. Data and analytics provide fantastic tools for that – you uncover opportunities, analyse their value and prove the results. Data shows you what is happening and what will happen next for you to be proactive in everything you do.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Major data warehouse projects made me realise that you need to be very systematic in large transformations as well as have a clear vision of what you work towards. You need to define a stepwise roadmap to measure progress and prove you will deliver committed value. You cannot fix a foundation first but strengthen it parallel to higher-level capabilities that deliver the actual value from the users' perspective. There is no business case for fixing the foundation first. This has enabled me to lead Stora Enso's industrial digitisation program called Smart Operations successfully.



CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, AI

Daniel Zakrisson

CEO and Co-Founder

SCALEOUT

 Click to view profile

Background and current role

I'm the CEO and co-founder of Scaleout, where we're solving the data access challenge in AI. Machine learning is about learning from data. The problem is that companies cannot use most of the data they already have for training machine learning models. There are issues with privacy, regulation and practicalities in getting data sets together.

We are developing a world-leading solution for federated learning. In federated learning, you move the training of machine learning models to the data. You avoid collecting all the data in one place. This solves the data access challenge.

I'm an engineer and entrepreneur by training and heart. I have a history of CTO and founder roles, and was working with machine learning in medtech before the deep learning revolution.

How I'd describe myself, my work and my passions

I'm an entrepreneur with a deep interest in using technology to change current paradigms. I want to open up access to information and data, increase collaboration and replace the need for trust with privacy-preserving systems. My passion has always been to solve really hard problems in new ways.

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

In several of my previous roles, I have experienced a product/market fit for a new solution. Even if the areas have been different, there are several learnings that I always bring with me. Some of them include:

- It's always a team effort.
- You don't solve your own problem, you solve someone else's problem.
- I have my own vision of what to achieve several years from now, but are flexible very in the short term.

I think it has been a huge strength to have worked in several quickly scaling startups. Startups work on a different timescale than other companies. Everything goes faster, and the amount of experience you can gain is invaluable. At the same time, most business is done by larger enterprises and it is crucial to have a solid understanding of how business is done in these organisations.





CATEGORY | MACHINE LEARNING, DATA ENGINEERING

Erik Zeitler

Co-Founder
STREAM ANALYZE

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Background and current role

I did a PhD in database technology at Uppsala University, building distributed data stream management systems.

After graduation, I started at Klarna in 2012, where I took the initiative to build a new data processing platform. I started a new team, which soon grew to a dozen people, providing tools for analysts to work systematically with data transformations from discovery, over A/B-testing, to production deployment, feeding Klarna’s real-time underwriting decision engines. Our work had a profound impact on Klarna’s tools, teams, and practices. Our data platform turned out to be a growth enabler for Klarna!

In 2020 I started at Stream Analyze AB. Our software sa.engine helps make devices smart, be it a car, a chainsaw, or a manufacturing device. Our clients use sa.engine to query each device or whole fleets of devices. We essentially turn a device fleet into a distributed data stream processing system! Our clients get new insights in, e.g. determining usage modes, modelling of wear and tear, predictive maintenance, and remote diagnostics. As our software also is able to execute AI/ML models on these devices, we build smartness into machines.

Quote

The truth is in the data. Let’s go find the truth!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Top three experiences:

- Solid research work in database technology, implementing scalable and distributed data stream management systems. Most important lesson: Algorithms, scalability, and efficiency are critical!
- Intrapreneurship at “The Swedish Fintech Unicorn”, building up a team, having a profound impact on the business. Most important lesson: Maintain a collaborative spirit in the team!
- Starting up a new business in distributed edge computing
This journey has just started!



CATEGORY | DATA SCIENCE, AI

Kjetil Åmdal-Sævik

Data Science Manager
ODA

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Background and current role

When I started working in business intelligence straight out of business school in 2014, I quickly became fascinated by the possibilities of solving problems with data and algorithms, which is what people seemed to be doing in this somewhat tangential and mysterious field called data science. I pursued this interest first as a consultant before moving into the retail sector and finally landing at Oda. Here, I have been a hands-on data scientist in various places in the company, working with product recommendations, forecasting, and logistics algorithms, as well as infrastructure and internal tooling for data science and ML. Recently I have transitioned into a more management-oriented role where I try to help our company and our data scientists truly unleash the potential in data and AI.

How I’d describe myself, my work and my passions

I want to make AI fun again! Lately, there has been a push towards making the field more... well, boring. But it is not a boring field by a long shot! I encourage all data scientists to nurture the innovation, creativity and craziness that makes our field so exciting. Go build some neural nets!

Past experiences, achievements and lessons that shaped my journey as a successful leader

Since modern data science is still such a new and immature field, I believe it is very hard to be a truly great data science leader without having been in the trenches and experienced what it’s actually like to solve problems with data and algorithms, or at least without an in-depth understanding of what data scientists actually do. New technology, advances in methods, availability of computing power and abundance of data makes it possible to solve old and new problems at any scale and add value in new and innovative ways. Without having experienced this hands-on, I don’t think I would have been able to strike what I believe is a good balance between gung-ho craziness and down-to-earth pragmatism that is needed for companies to truly add value with data science.



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